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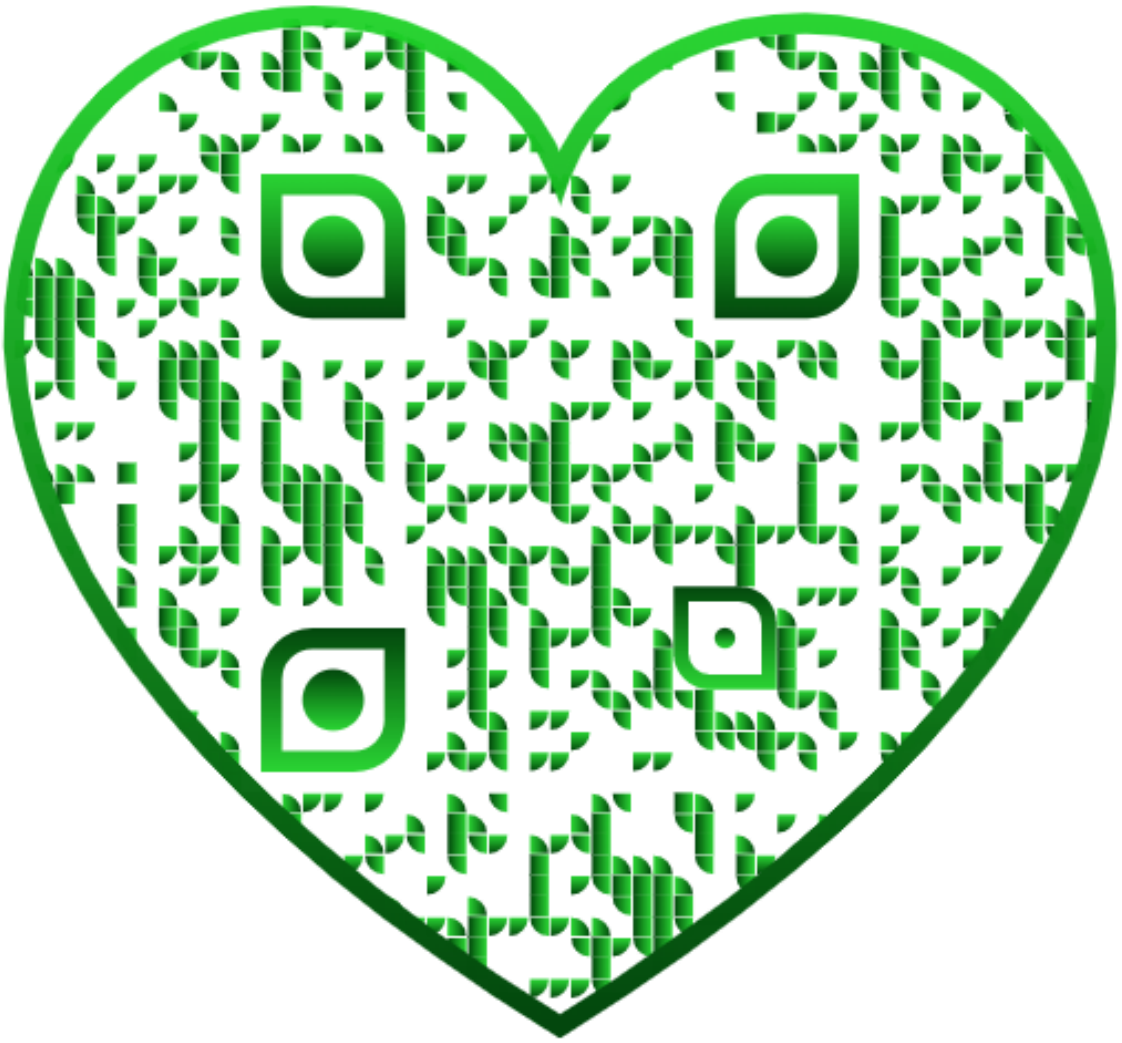

“EVERY BASS SHOULD HAVE STRINGS THIS GOOD!”

MIKE DIRNT
GREEN DAY

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Electric Guitars

7028 - Brian May, Antique Cherry
7027 - Brian May Metal May, Black
0000 - DBZ , 21 models in stock
0000 - Duesenberg, 4 models in stock
5205 - Epiphone Broadway Jazz Semi, Natural
5605 - Epiphone Casino Semi, Natural
7046 - Epiphone Dot Semi, Vintage Sunburst
9154 - Epiphone ES175, Vintage Sunburst
8220 - Epiphone ES339 Semi Hollowbody, Ebony
9155 - Epiphone ES339, Natural
8318 - Epiphone ES339 Ultra III, Cherry
8493 - Epiphone ES339 Ultra, Antique Natural
8528 - Epiphone ES339 Ultra, Vintage Sunburst
7051 - Epiphone G310, Red
8155 - Epiphone G310 SG-Shape, Ebony
5432 - Epiphone G310 SG Shape, White
8154 - Epiphone G400 Custom, Antique White
4750 - Epiphone G400 SG, Ebony
8156 - Epiphone G400 SG Shape, Worn Brown
5364 - Epiphone Les Paul Cust GX Dirty Fingers
8365 - Epiphone Les Paul Standard in Gold
8366 - Epiphone Les Paul Tribute 60s Sunburst
8190 - Epiphone Les Paul Ultra III, Ebony
8096 - Epiphone Ltd Ed Flying V, Antique White
8165 - Epiphone Ltd Ed 1961 SG, Alpine White
8325 - Epiphone Ltd Edition ES345, Alpine White
8985 - Epiphone Robb Flynn Baritone Flying V
8367 - Epiphone SG Special 1961 Reissue,White
8101 - Epiphone by Gibson, Pre-Owned
4233 - Fender USA Deluxe Telecaster, Tungsten
4231 - Fender Am Special Strat, Candy Apple Red
9073 - American Special Stratocaster HSS, Black
9074 - Fender American Special Strat, Sunburst
9082 - Fender Am Special Tele Olympic White
9157 - Fender American Special Tele, Sunburst
7942 - Fender American Standard Strat, Sunburst
8373 - Fender Am Standard Strat, Olympic White
8244 - Fender American Standard Tele in Candy Cola
9134 - Fender American Stratocaster Daphne Blue
9023 - Fender American Vintage '70s Strat Reissue
5291 - Fender Classic Player 50s Strat in Gold
5298 - Fender Classic Player Baja Tele Des Sand
7112 - Fender Deluxe Lonestar Strat, Sunburst
8369 - Fender Deluxe Nashville Tele, Sunburst
9085 - Fender FSR Strat HSS TBX Amber Burst
8111 - Fender FSR Standard Strat in Silverburst
9086 - Fender FSR Strat HSH Hardtail, Charcoal
9087 - Fender FSR Tele Custom P90 Sunset Orange
9088 - Fender FSR Tele Deluxe, Candy Apple Red
7075 - Fender Highway One Tele, Sunburst
4634 - Fender Jim Root Signature Strat, Black
8268 - Fender Lead 2 Electric Guitar
8113 - Fender Modern Player Available To Order
8286 - Fender Modern Player Telecaster Thinline Deluxe
7784 - Fender Mustang Pawn Shop Special, Red
9089 - Fender Pawn Shop 51 Stratocaster, Black
9090 - Fender Pawn Shop 51 Stratocaster, Blonde
9091 - Fender Pawn Shop 72 Strat Sea Foam Green
5335 - Fender Road Worn 50's Tele in Sunburst
5287 - Fender Road Worn 50s Strat in Black
8290 - Fender Road Worn 60's Strat, Sunburst
4229 - Fender Road Worn Player Strat, Sunburst
4232 - Fender Road Worn Player Tele, Black
9047 - Fender Select Strat, Dark Cherry Burst
8389 - Fender Squire SE Strat in Black
8371 - Fender Std Strat Mexican, Midnight Wine
9158 - Fender Standard Strat, Pre-Owned, Black
7954 - Fender Standard Strat, Copper Met Burst
4326 - Fender Standard Telecaster, Arctic White
4560 - Fender Standard Telecaster, Black
4748 - Fender Standard Tele, Brown Sunburst
8356 - Fender Stratocaster Plus in Ice Blue
8374 - Fender USA Std Strat in 3 Tone Sunburst
8285 - Fret King Jerry Donahue, Natural
0000 - G & L , 4 models in stock
4154 - Gibson Billie Joe Armstrong Les Paul Jr
8119 - Gibson Buckethead Les Paul Studio
5299 - Gibson CS336 Semi, Vintage Sunburst
8011 - Gibson Custom ES335 Dot in Silverburst
9153 - Gibson Custom L5 Jazz Guitar, Circa 1973
7882 - Gibson Custom Shop ES339, Pelham Blue
9150 - Gibson ES137 Custom, Triburst
8029 - Gibson ES175 1956 Original
8030 - Gibson ES175 1963 Original
7846 - Gibson Explorer in Classic White
8376 - Gibson Les Paul Classic 60s Trans Ebony
8212 - Gibson Les Paul Junior, Sunburst
8118 - Gibson Les Paul Junior, Yellow Gloss
9043 - Gibson Les Paul Standard 08 Chicago Blue
8026 - Gibson Les Paul Standard 08 Desert Burst
7063 - Gibson Les Paul Standard, Chicago Blue
7033 - Gibson Les Paul Std Trad Heritage Cherry
8126 - Gibson Les Paul Studio '60s Tribute
8530 - Gibson Les Paul Studio 60s Goldtop
5090 - Gibson Les Paul Studio Lefty, Wine Red
7888 - Gibson Les Paul Studio in Alpine White
7900 - Gibson Les Paul Studio in Ebony
8117 - Gibson Les Paul Studio, Green Swirl
7948 - Gibson Les Paul Supreme, Trans Black
5428 - Gibson Les Paul Traditional in Ebony
8206 - Gibson Melody Maker Special, Blue Stain
8197 - Gibson Midtown Stand w/Bigsby, Faded Red
8202 - Gibson Nighthawk. Pelham Blue
8211 - Gibson SG Junior 60s , Ebony Left Handed
5594 - Gibson SG Special Electric Guitar in White
5448 - Gibson SG Special Fade in Worn Brown
5152 - Gibson USA Les Paul Junior 58, Sat White
9071 - Gibson USA Les Paul Supreme Desert Burst
4603 - Gretsch G6136 Steve Stills White Falcon
9144 - Ibanez 2355DX Vintage Semi in Sunburst
9151 - Ibanez George Benson
8381 - Ibanez Prestige RGB70 in Aged White
4151 - Jackson, 8 models in stock
0000 - Levin, 6 models in stock
0000 - Lodestone, 22 models in stock

Electric Guitars

7929 - MusicMan Axis Super Sport Blue Burst
9113 - MusicMan Luke BFR Koa, Island Burst
4720 - MusicMan Silhouette Special, Candy Red
4664 - MusicMan Silo 30, White
4778 - MusicMan Sterling Silo 20, Black
0000 - PRS, 9 models in stock
0000 - Patrick Eggle , 6 models in stock
9001 - Peavey Rockmaster Captain America
4268 - Rickenbacker 330 12 String Semi, Jetglo
4269 - Rickenbacker 360 12 String Semi, Jetglo
6951 - Rickenbacker 360 Semi, Fireglo
6952 - Rickenbacker 360 Semi, Jetglo
4270 - Rickenbacker 360 Semi, Mapleglo
9025 - Rickenbacker 620, Fireglo
8992 - Roland , 5 models in stock
8021 - Squier Classic Vibe Strat 60s Lefthanded
9079 - Ventures Bob Bogle Signature in Sunburst
9078 - Ventures VM65MBL Electric Guitar, Blue
4256 - Vintage AV2, Sunburst
6983 - Washburn, 31 models in stock
6425 - Westcoast ST Junior in Black & Sunburst
6449 - Westcoast ST1 in Ivory, Red & Natural
9156 - Yamaha AE500, Black
8416 - Yamaha Pacifica 012 Electric Guitar in Red Met
8414 - Yamaha Pacifica 012 El Gtr Dark Blu Met
6955 - Yamaha Pacifica 112V in Rasberry Red
6957 - Yamaha Pacifica 112V in Tobacco Sunburst
4780 - Yamaha Pacifica 112VCX, Vintage White
8121 - Yamaha Pacifica 311H, Vintage White
8184 - Yamaha Pacifica 510V , Candy Apple Red

Bass Guitars

4557 - Bass Collection Power Bass, Black
7479 - Breedlove JB350 CR4, Electro 4, Blonde
8301 - Breedlove Electro Acoustic Bass Natural
8687 - Breedlove Passport Plus B350/CB4
4910 - Bridge Cetus Electric Double Bass
4909 - Bridge Cetus Electric Double Bass in Marble
8098 - Epiphone Thunderbird IV, Ebony
4882 - Fender USA 62 Vintage Precision Sunburst
7944 - Fender American Deluxe Jazz Bass, Black
9084 - Fender American Special Jazz Bass, CAR
9083 - Fender Am Special Jazz Bass, Sunburst
8431 - Fender USA Standard Jazz Bass in Black
7943 - Fender Am Stan Precision Bass, Sunburst
8927 - Fender Geddy Lee Jazz Bass in Sunburst
7076 - Fender Highway One Precision, Wine
8928 - Fender Marcus Miller Jazz Bass, Sunburst
8177 - Fender Modern Player Jaguar Bass, Black
8113 - Fender Modern Player Available To Order
8929 - Fender Roger Waters Precision Bass
4749 - Fender Standard Precision, Candy Red
8287 - Fender Standard Jazz Bass, Brown S.burst
5572 - Fender Standard Precision, Arctic White
5190 - FleaBass The Wild One Junior, Black
0000 - G & L , 2 models in stock
0000 - Levin, 8 models in stock
8214 - Lightwaves Saber 5 String Fretless Bass
8073 - Lodestone Primal Artist
8075 - Lodestone Primal Instinct J Bass, Green
8076 - Lodestone Primal Instinct J Bass, Sburst
8079 - Lodestone Primal Instinct P Bass, Green
8080 - Lodestone Primal Instinct Pbass Sunburst
8078 - Lodestone Primal Instinct P Bass, Cream
8081 - Lodestone Primal Pro in Chignal Blue
8083 - Lodestone Primal Pro, Rodings White
8082 - Lodestone Primal Pro 4, Tobacco Sunburst
8174 - Lodestone Primal Pro 5, Chignal Blue
4997 - MTD Kingston Heir, Trans Cherry
5723 - Marleaux Consat Custom 6, Natural
4178 - Marleaux Votan Deluxe 5, Blue Jeans
7930 - MusicMan Sterling 4 String Bass in Red
4703 - MusicMan Stingray 2EQ, Blue Pearl
4781 - MusicMan Stingray 3EQ, True Gold
4920 - MusicMan Stingray 5, Black
7923 - Musicman Gilded White Classic Stingray 4
8997 - Musicman Sterling SB14 Bass, Sunburst
5110 - NS Design NXT Electric Double Bass
7301 - Ovation USA Elite, Electro 4, Natural
4253 - Overwater Aspiration Artist, Trans Red
4250 - Overwater Aspiration Deluxe 4, Amber
9002 - Overwater Aspiration Deluxe Bass, Black
9060 - Overwater Aspiration Elite, Zebrano
9059 - Overwater Aspiration Elite, Wenge Top
8435 - Overwater Aspiration Std 4, Black Cherry
9061 - Overwater Classic Jazz, Candy Apple Red
7849 - Overwater Contemporary Jazz, Trans Blue
9009 - Overwater Contemporary 5-String Bass
8198 - Overwater J Series Deluxe 4, Sunburst
4355 - Overwater UK Perception, Natural
7259 - Overwater Perception Std 5, Bubinga
5954 - Peavey Cirrus Series BXP, Redwood
6909 - Rickenbacker 4001C64, Mapleglo
6919 - Rickenbacker 4003, Mapleglo
0000 - Rockbass , 3 models in stock
9044 - Sandberg Panther 4 String Bass, Pre-Owned
8213 - Spector NS2000 5 String Bass, Blue
0000 - Squier , 4 models in stock
7922 - Ventures VMB75 Bass Guitar, Candy Apple
8436 - Warwick Thumb Bass 4 Bolt on in Natural
8229 - Washburn WB66 Idol 4 String in Trans Red
0000 - Westcoast, 8 models in stock
8157 - Yamaha BB1024X in Vintage White
4649 - Yamaha BB2024X, Vintage White
9006 - Yamaha BB424X 4 String Bass
8275 - Yamaha BB425X, Vintage White
9000 - Yamaha RBX170
8999 - Yamaha RBX5A2 5 String Bass, Black
6360 - Yamaha SLB200 Silent Double Bass
4331 - Yamaha TRB1004J, Trans Black
9005 - Yamaha TRB1006J 6 String Bass

Acoustic & Electro Acoustics

8846 - Ashbury AT-14 Tenor Guitar
8851 - Ashbury AT-24 Tenor Guitar
8299 - Breedlove AC200 / SM Acoustic Guitar,Nat
5002 - Breedlove AC250CR Lefty Electro, Natural
5003 - Breedlove AD200SM, Dreadnought, Natural
5004 - Breedlove AD20SR+, Dreadnought, Natural
8033 - Breedlove AD25/SM
8035 - Breedlove AJ250/SF Plus Electro Acoustic
7979 - Breedlove Passport Plus C250SFE
4282 - Breedlove Passport + D/SFE Elec Sunburst
7996 - Breedlove J350/EF Cutaway
4894 - Cort Earth 200 Lefty Dreadnought Natural
4612 - Dave King Katrina Model 000, Sunburst
4613 - Dave King Louise, Koa, Parlour, Natural
8249 - Eastman ERO E
0000 - Eko Ranger , 5 models in stock
9097 - Epiphone DR100 Dreadnought, Pelham Blue
9075 - Faith Eclipse Venus 12 String Electro, Black
5213 - Faith Eclipse Jupiter Electro Acoustic Guitar , Blk
7956 - Faith FECV Venus Cutaway Electro MKII
9076 - Faith FJCETB Jupiter Jumbo Cutaway
9102 - Faith Neptune FNCETB Electro Acoustic
9109 - Faith FSL Saturn Left Handed
9110 - Faith FVHGL Venus High Gloss, Natural
7958 - Faith Neptune FNCE Natural Cutaway
9104 - Faith Saturn Cutaway High Gloss FSCEHG
8300 - Faith FECS Electro Acoustic Guitar
9103 - Faith Saturn FS Dreadnought Natural
9105 - Faith Saturn High Gloss FSHG Acoustic Guitar
4717 - Faith Venus FV, Electro, Natural
8149 - Faith Venus Trembesi 12 String, Natural
6928 - Fender CD160SE Electro 12 String, Black
5096 - Fender CD60, Natural
8891 - Fender Elvis Presley Kingman
7918 - Gibson Blues King in Vintage Sunburst
9099 - Gibson J185CE Blues King, Pre-Owned
7032 - Gibson J200 Standard Jumbo Guitar
8241 - Gibson J200 Studio, Vintage Sunburst
4681 - Gibson J45, Custom Shop, Sunburst
8700 - Gibson J45 Custom Shop, Lightburst
7062 - Gibson L200 Emmylou Harris Signature
8296 - Gibson J-45 Std Acoustic Guitar
7120 - Gitane Cigano GJ5 Gypsy Jazz, Natural
7122 - Gitane D500 Gypsy Jazz, Natural
7216 - Gitane DG250 Gypsy Jazz, Natural
4642 - Guild GADJF30, Jumbo Electro, Blonde
9030 - Hofner President 1960, Sunburst
4555 - Jimmy Moon Bryan Adams Signature
4554 - Jimmy Moon PF0003 Electro, Pau Ferro B&S
6948 - Jimmy Moon RD3, Electro, Natural
5601 - K Yairi G1F, Parlour, Vintage Sunburst
7304 - LAG T100ACE Cutaway Electro Brown Shadow
8953 - LAG T100DCE Dreadnought
7967 - LAG T66D12 Dreadnought 12-String
8274 - Landola J855L Jumbo Left Handed
8320 - Landola JC855 Electro Acoustic Guitar LH
0000 - Levin , 20 models in stock
9092 - Martin 0001, Pre-Owned
4317 - Martin 0028VS, Parlour, Natural
6554 - Martin D18 Dreadnought, Natural
5702 - Martin D28 Dreadnought, Natural
6008 - Martin D35 Dreadnought, Natural
5013 - Martin D41 Dreadnought, Natural
8277 - Martin DC15ME Dreadnought Cutaway
8199 - Martin DCME Electro Acoustic Guitar
8319 - Martin DCX1E LAcoustic Guitar LH
8038 - Martin DCX1E Electro Acoustic Lefty
8041 - Martin DCX1E in Black
8022 - Martin DX1 JMAE Westside Custom Series
8167 - Martin HD28VS Pre-Owned Acoustic Guitar
7115 - Martin LX1 Little Martin
7320 - Martin LX1E, Electro Travel Guitar
8008 - Martin LXM Tenor
6007 - Martin OM21 Orchesta, Natural
8088 - Martin SWDGT SustainableWood Dreadnought
8122 - Martin WCE Style III 000CX1RE CFM Custom
4402 - Northwood MAN80 Mini Jumbo Mango Electro
6405 - Northwood R70D, Dreadnought Electro, Nat
6404 - Northwood R70 00 14fret Electro, Natural
4400 - Northwood R80, 000V Electro, Natural
6403 - Northwood R80, 0M Electro, Natural
5093 - Ovation CDX24 Electro Acoustic Guitar in Natural
4855 - PJ Eggle Etowah, 000, 12 Fret, Natural
7253 - PJ Eggle Linville C, OM, Natural
4779 - PJ Eggle Linville Gareth Pearson Electro
4857 - PJ Eggle Saluda, Small Jumbo, Natural
7915 - Pilgrim by Vintage VPG100
7974 - Rainsong WS1000 Graphite Guitar
4620 - Recording King RM996 Resonator, Green
5257 - Satori YD18EQ, Dreadnought Electro, Nat
5256 - Satori YD28EQ, Dreadnought Electro, Nat
5252 - Satori YD28HEQ, Dreadnought Electro, Nat
8234 - Satori YD42EQ Electro Acoustic
5255 - Satori YO28HEQ, OM Electro, Natural
7973 - Tanglewood Michael Sanden Master Design
9163 - Tanglewood TW130ASM OM
4180 - Tanglewood TW130 ASMCE Orchestra Natural
4188 - Tanglewood TW40 DANE Dreadnought Electro
8330 - Tanglewood TW40SD VSE in Vintage Sunburst
8293 - Tanglewood TW55N Acoustic Guitar
8328 - Tanglewood TW55VS Super Jumbo, VS
7998 - Tanglewood TWRSF CE Cutaway
8221 - Taylor W12CE Electro Acoustic, Pre-Owned
0000 - Vintage , 3 models in stock
0000- Washburn , 3 models in stock
0000 - Westcoast , 5 models in stock
7983 - Yairi NY2001L Lefthanded Parlour Guitar
8139 - Yamaha APX20, White, Pre-Owned
8263 - Yamaha APX500 II Electro Acoustic, Nat
8020 - Yamaha CPX700, Tinted Finish
9164 - Yamaha FG355 Acoustic Guitar
7364 - Yamaha JR2, Compact Travel, Sunburst
7290 - Yamaha JR2 Compact Travel, Natural
8141 - Yamaha SLG110S Silent Steel String Guitar

Classicals, Ukes, Banjos, Mandolins

4985 - Asturias Standard Model Classical Guitar
8248 - Azahar Lute
6032 - Azahar Model 101 Classical Guitar
8587 - Azahar Model 105 Cadete Classical Guitar
8588 - Azahar Model 105 Classical Guitar
8589 - Azahar Model 130 Sandalo FLamenca Guitar
8590 - Azahar Model 31A Classical Guitar
6031 - Azahar Model 40B Classical Guitar
8361 - LAG TN200A 14CE Electro Acoustic Guitar
8584 - Mendieta Conservatoire A Classical
6776 - Mendieta Conservatoire B Classical
8507 - Mendieta Conservatoire C Classical
6775 - Mendieta Conservatoire ECE Elec Classic
6779 - Mendieta Estudio P Classical Guitar
6778 - Mendieta Estudio R Classical Guitar
6777 - Mendieta Estudio S Classical
8240 - Mendieta Estudio T Classical Guitar
6773 - Mendieta Flamenco LCE Electro Flamenco
8585 - Mendieta Professional Classica Guitar
8586 - Mendieta Professional Flamenco Guitar
5486 - Raimundo 104B 61cm Classical
8347 - Raimundo 104B Classical Guitar L/H
5485 - Raimundo 104M
5484 - Raimundo 104M 61cm 3/4 Size Classical
8109 - Raimundo 145 Flamenco Guitar
5360 - Ramirez 125 Year Aniversary Classical
6029 - Ramirez 1NE Classical Guitar
6335 - Ramirez 2E Classical Guitar
6026 - Ramirez 2NCWE Electro Classical Cutaway
6028 - Ramirez 4E Classical Guitar
5644 - Ramirez George Harrison Model Classical
6337 - Ramirez R1 Classical Guitar
6336 - Ramirez R2 Classical Guitar
8357 - Ramirez R4 Classical Guitar
6027 - Ramirez S1 Classical Guitar
0000 - Roberto classical guitars, 3 models in stock
0000 - Strunal classical guitars, 3 models in stock
0000 - Westcoast classical guitars , 7 models in stock
5616 - Yamaha CGX171CCA Electro Classical
8491 - Antonio Carvalho Deluxe Concert Ukulele
9130 - Antonio Carvalho Deluxe Tenor Ukulele
5029 - Antonio Carvalho Soprano Ukulele
7241 - Fender Hau'oli Tenor Ukulele
9081 - Fender Mino'Aka Concert Ukulele
5310 - Fender Nohea Tenor Ukulele
7256 - Fender Pa'ina Paina Tenor Ukulele
9080 - Fender U'Uku Soprano Ukulele
8127 - Kala U Bass in Mahogany
4722 - Kala U-Bass Ukulele Bass Spruce Top
0000 - Mahalo , 8 models in stock
8128 - Martin S1 Ukulele
8514 - Ohana BK10 Baritone Ukulele
8515 - Ohana BK20 Baritone Ukulele
9050 - Ohana CK20CE Concert Uke
4466 - Ohana CK20S Concert Ukulele
8518 - Ohana CK25S Concert Ukulele in Mahogany
8520 - Ohana CK35GCE Concert Ukulele
8519 - Ohana CK35GS Concert Ukulele in Mahogany
8511 - Ohana CK35S Concert Ukulele in Mahogany
8513 - Ohana CK50MG Concert Ukulele
8512 - Ohana CK50WG Concert Ukulele
8521 - Ohana CK60C Concert Ukulele Cutaway Body
7210 - Ohana CK70RB Round Back Concert Ukulele
8508 - Ohana PK10S Soprano Ukulele Pineapple Style
8516 - Ohana PK25G Soprano Ukulele Pineapple
8510 - Ohana SK10BL Soprano Ukulele in Black
8509 - Ohana SK10CR Soprano Ukulele, Cherry Red
4712 - Ohana SK10S Soprano Ukulele
7097 - Ohana SK15-BL Soprano Ukulele in Blue
7099 - Ohana SK15BLK Soprano Ukulele in Black
7098 - Ohana SK15GN Soprano Ukulele in Green
7095 - Ohana SK15-RD Soprano Ukulele in Red
4711 - Ohana SK20S Soprano Ukulele
8517 - Ohana SK22Z Sop Ukulele Zebrawood B&S
4710 - Ohana SK25 Soprano Ukulele
4668 - Ohana SK35 Soprano Ukulele
4715 - Ohana SK35G Solid Mahogany Gloss
9052 - Ohana SK38 Soprano Uke, Mahognay
9051 - Ohana SK50 Soprano Uke
7108 - Ohana SK70MG Soprano Ukulele
7106 - Ohana SK75 Soprano Ukulele
7107 - Ohana SK75R Soprano Ukulele
4464 - Ohana TK35CG Tenor Ukulele
9049 - Ohana TK35GS 5 String Tenor Uke
9048 - Ohana TK50G Tenor Ukulele
8522 - Ohana TK70G Tenor Ukulele Spruce Top
5009 - Ozark Ukulele Banjo
8335 - Spongebob Pineapple Ukulele
8272 - Ashbury AB35L Left handed 5 String Banjo
5200 - Deering Boston 6 String With EQ
5747 - Deering Goodtime 19 Fret Tenor
4746 - Deering Goodtime 2, 17 Fret Tenor
5000 - Deering Goodtime Left Handed with EQ
5743 - Deering Goodtime Classic 2 EQ
5741 - Deering Goodtime Classic 2
5745 - Deering Goodtime Classic
5744 - Deering Goodtime Classic With EQ
5742 - Deering Goodtime Special Classic 5 EQ
5740 - Deering Sierra
5738 - Vega Bluegrass Senator
0000 - Fender Banjos , 3 models in stock
5009 - Ozark Ukulele Banjo
6423 - Westcoast BJ2
8810 - Ashbury AM-11 Mandolin (Army and Navy)
8826 - Ashbury AM-325 Octave Mandola
8824 - Ashbury AM-370 Mandolin
8821 - Ashbury Style S Electro Mandolin
8317 - Epiphone MM50 Mandolin Sunburst
4551 - Jimmy Moon A Plus E Electro, Natural
7875 - Jimmy Moon A Plus E Electro, Sunburst
4564 - Jimmy Moon A Plus Electro Bouzouki, Nat
4553 - Jimmy Moon Standard Mandolin
4650 - Rally CFM70 Mandolin in Trans Red
5275 - Savannah SA120 Mandolin in Black
5311 - Savannah SA120 Mandolin in Natural
7245 - Washburn M3SW Mandolin
7246 - Washburn M3SWE Electro-Acoustic Mandolin
0000 - Westcoast Mandolins , 3 models in stock

For full guitar details, pricing and photos, enter the number next to each guitar model into our SKU search facility on the website.

Guitar & Bass

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www.guitarmagazine.co.uk

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Subscriptions & back issues Guitar & Bass Magazine
https://anthem.subscribeonline.co.uk
Tel 0844 322 1291 (UK)
Tel +44 (0) 1795 414 781 (overseas)
Email guitarandbass@servicehelpline.co.uk
Price (12 issues) £49.80 UK basic annual rate
See page 48 for subscription details

Printed by Benham Goodhead Print
Tel +44 (0) 1869 363 333

Distributed by Marketforce (UK) Ltd,
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Dedicated followers of fashion...

Although it's more years ago now than I'd care to remember, I still recall the day I first learned that there was a time that the Gibson Les Paul Standard stopped being made for some years. On the occasions I've mentioned this to fellow guitar players, the conversation has always turned to whether they knew about it or not, and why and how it happened. Well, this month's cover story delves into those many questions, and it's a riveting read for all lovers of guitar history. (Yes, I would say that. But it doesn't make it any less true!)

Among the reviews this month are fine offerings from Fender, Washburn, Orange and Hagstrom, while top-notch players like Eric Johnson and Frank White spend some quality *G&B* time telling us their thoughts. Vintage gear fans are invited to check out the guitar collection of Ace from Skunk Anansie, to ponder with Phil Harris the importance of vintage spare parts, and to take a trip down memory lane with Sid Bishop to the days when the weekly edition of *Exchange & Mart* was a must-read for guitar buyers.

We provide all this, plus tuition features on Duane Allman and Phil Lynott – and a fine article on how to improve a down-at-heel acoustic – in the hope that it satisfies your guitar-lovin' needs for a wee while. Enjoy the issue...

John

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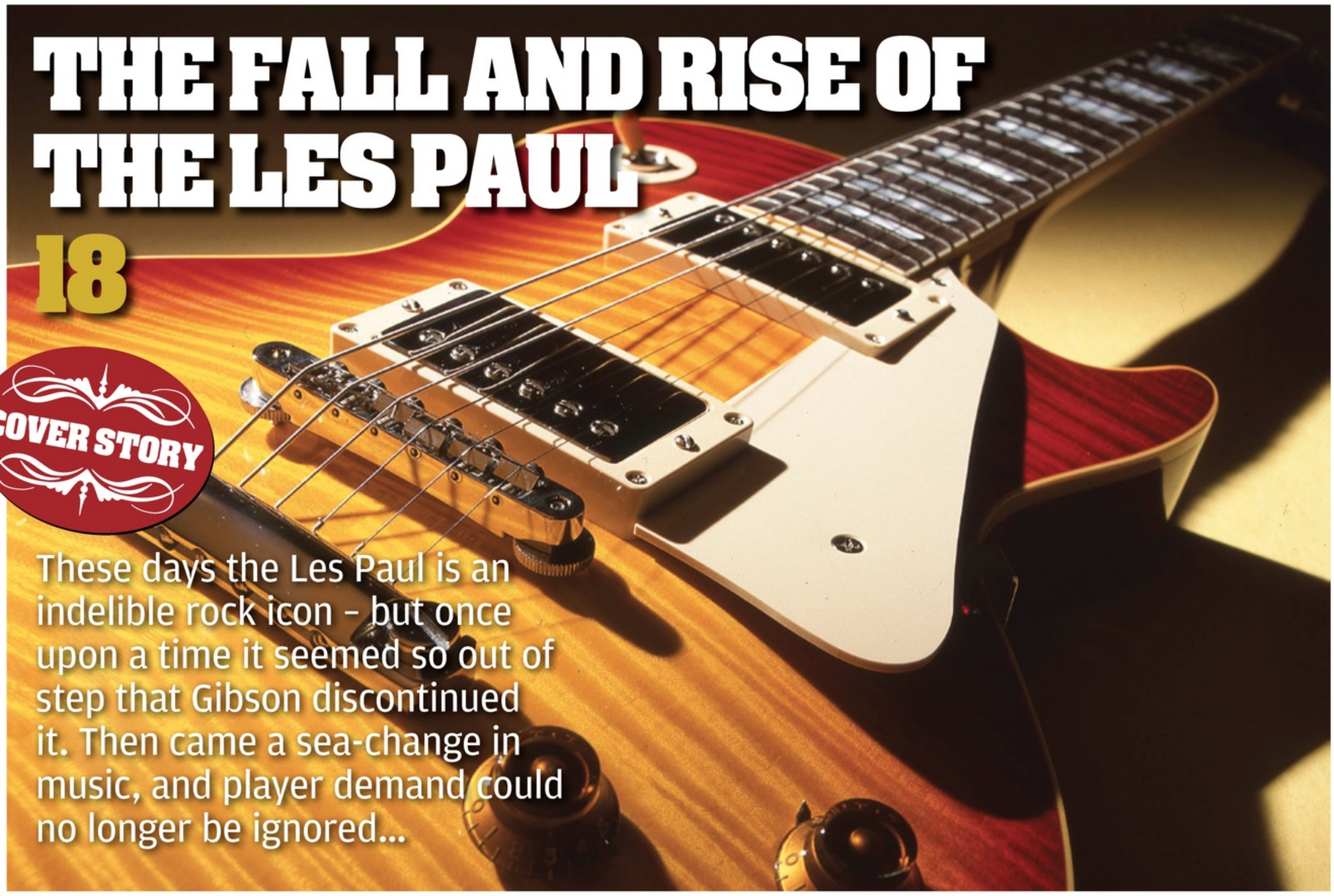

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Reverberations

Write to *Guitar & Bass*, Anthem Publishing, Station House, Station Approach, 33 North Street, Carshalton, SM5 2HW or e-mail us: guitarandbass@anthem-publishing.com
Please note, we reserve the right to edit where we feel it is appropriate, or to print extracts from longer correspondences

STAR LETTER

TRANS-GLOBAL CONSPIRACY

I've got a bone to pick with just about the entire musical instrument industry: I think they're missing a trick – and that includes you, my favourite guitar magazine. The subject of my frustration is the Vanishing Transistor Amp Mystery.

Why has true transistor amp development stalled? At one time we were really getting there with Award-Session, Evans, Roland, Pierce, Webb, Polytone... even Yamaha, and some Fenders and Peaveys. How about the Gibson Lab Series amps? BB King used them, and nobody would criticise HIS tone! Most amp makers now seem to concentrate on valve amps (or pseudo-hybrids with one valve mostly for show). I've had many valve amps, some great, some awful, but it seems as if the world has gone back to being obsessed with valves to the point that anything with a tube is considered automatically better and more 'musical' than one without.

And if you can't go valve – the assumption being that you can't AFFORD to go valve – then you're forced to buy a modeller. I don't want a zillion digital effects and amp sims at the expense of (in my humble opinion) questionable budget-bracket quality, because I've got some lovely pedals and I'd like to use them, thanks very much. I want an amp with one great sound, adaptable to cope with different guitars and rooms, but with less weight and less upkeep than valves. I'm also worried about the long-term prospects of Class D and switchmode amps, a technology that I don't understand and I'm not sure anybody else does either.

Light, loud, with an even frequency response and fantastic reliability... what happened to the tranny amp? Or am I missing something?

Jez Davies *via email*

G&B **We agree with you that, whether it be fuelled by fashion and/or a genuine belief that they are better, valve amps have risen in popularity over the past few years. However, when we ran an article on the subject of transistors versus valves in July 2009, we did receive feedback from readers and amp makers who came out in support for transistors. We agree that the idea of valves as being more 'real' is now seen by many to be an absolute fact, and that denigrates some of the fine transistor amps that have been built in the past. We also agree that the invention of modelling amp has squeezed some of the market that transistor amps used to operate in. As always, the future success of transistor amps depends on demand from players. So what say all of you about transistor amps? Please let us know...**

Rosetti

Written a Star Letter? Contact Rosetti on 01376 550033 to claim your Fusion gig bag – electric, acoustic or bass available!

NEW VINTAGE & RARE

We do understand and sympathise with Adi Vines' situation regarding his amplifier [*Tales From The Road*, May 2012 issue]. The situation regarding the old Bath shop is truly very sad and upsetting. In spite of every effort, for over a year the shop's landlords, Mrs Lynda Brine and Christine Fear of Assembly Antiques, have refused to return company and third party assets, instead preferring to release them upon request themselves. In view of this situation we have been unable to carry out our duty of care as would normally be the case. Vintage & Rare has always been known for its attention to detail and customer care, and to be put in a position totally beyond our control is of deep concern.

We have a new shop in Bath, a five-storey Georgian building situated at 11 Queen Street. We want it to be a real community shop which caters for all local guitar players; knowledge is valuable, and we want to encourage kids to play old vintage guitars as well offer them the opportunity to start off in the right way with Squiers and so forth. Bath has a long history when it comes to music and festivals and we hope we can do our little bit to help that carry on, and that our new shop can

serve and become part of the community.
It has always been our policy to look after our customers, so if anyone has any queries regarding the Bath shops, old or new, then please get in touch on one of the following numbers: London, 0207 240 7500; Bath, 01225 463777.

Chris Trigg *via email*

PRIVATE THOUGHTS

The 'plop' of your excellent magazine as it hits the floor via my letterbox each month has definitely got louder recently. It's all to do with the increasing number of weighty pages devoted to guitar collections. When I look at my own collection (I'm embarrassed to call it a collection, really), a trusty (cost an arm-and-a-leg) Gibson Les Paul and my one-and-only Suzuki 9507 Hummingbird acoustic bought for £20 from the Kay's catalogue 40 years ago at £2 per month (oh, and the inevitable cheap swan-necked electric that most of us have lurking in the depths of the bedroom wardrobe), it's no surprise that images of collectors drowning in wave after wave of guitars seem to come from another planet.

No disrespect to the guys featured (and really, I'm jealous as hell) but for the rest of us, it's like looking at a display of peacock's feathers, knowing that you will be very lucky to ever have had one or two of them hanging on your wall in your lifetime!
I'd rather see some of these 'collectors' pages devoted to more articles for the rest of us. By that I mean articles on the following: plectrums, how to keep a guitar clean, how best to store it at home and on stage, guitar leads, cases (endless), which amps/set-ups to use to get the same tone as your hero (Rory Gallagher!), strings, amp stands, how best to set up your kit onstage, understanding the backs of amps! The list is endless. These are some of the things that the rest of us guitar players would love to explore. I'm looking forward to not hearing the next 'plop' though my letterbox, but very much looking forward to reading the next issue. Well, most of it, anyway.

Giuliano Carosi *via email*

G&B **Many thanks for taking the time to give us your thoughts, Giuliano. We continue to run the collection features (and occasionally even put two in) because the feedback we get from readers is that, on the whole, they really enjoy them. Are we also jealous of some of the collections? Yes, we are. But apart from the 'drool' factor, the point of the features is to find out about the player and the stories behind what they've chosen, how they got it, and why they wanted it in the first place. Some of the suggestions you mention in your email have been covered by *G&B* in the past, but we're particularly intrigued by some of the suggestions focusing on strings, plectrums and the like. It's something we've been thinking about for a while, but it's not easy to approach either of these subjects in a really effective way. Does anybody else feel that we should run more features on the things Giuliano has mentioned? Please do tell us, when you get a chance...**

THE JOYS OF THE SINGLE LIFE

Loved the article on single-coil guitars in the last issue. They are, and remain, the best. Humbucker lovers may claim that they are superior in looks and sound to the 'humble' single-coil but they, to put it politely, are talking out of their rear ends. Long may single-coils rule!

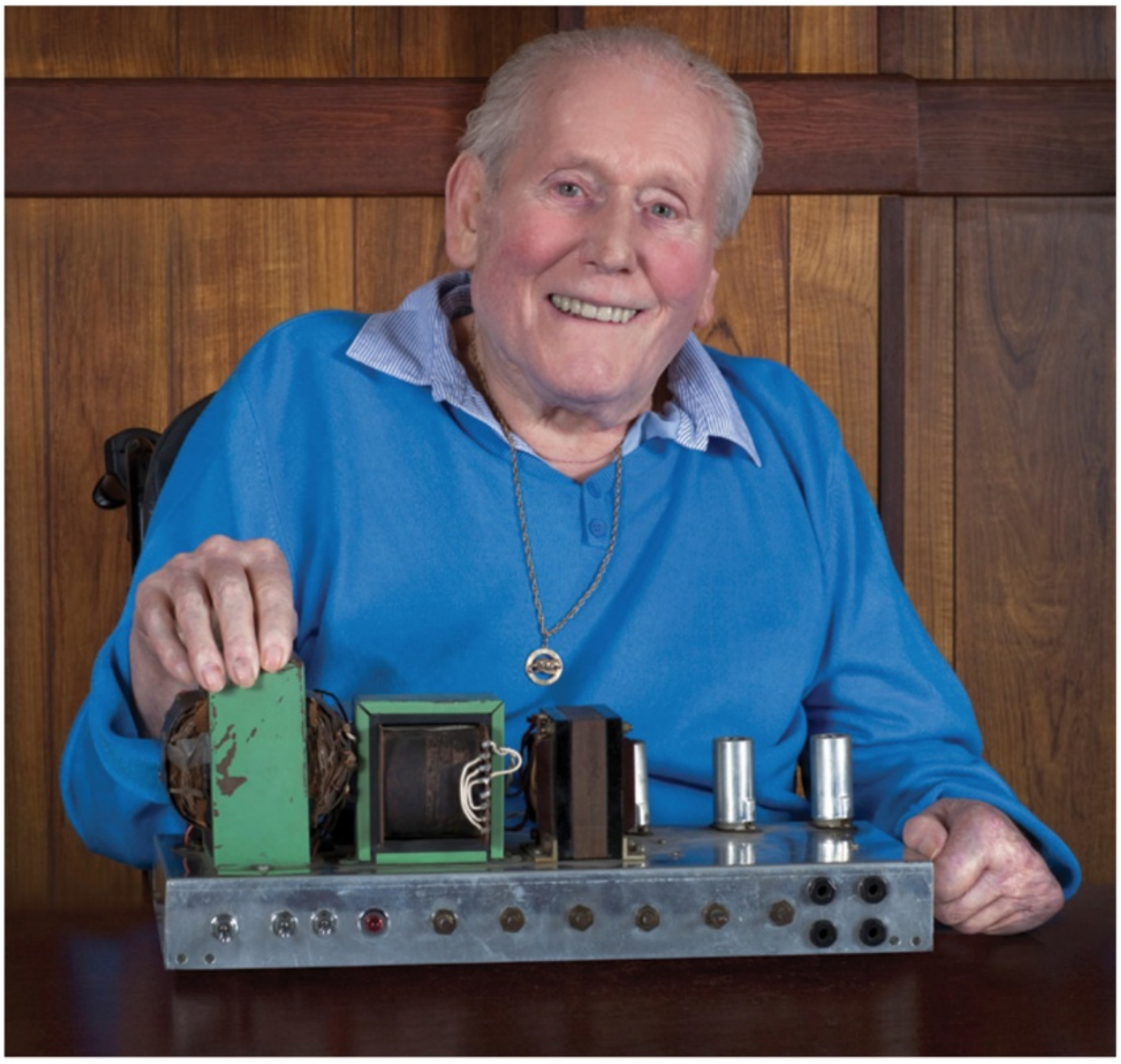
Dave Francillia *via email*

G&B **Woah! This has become one feisty Reverberations, this issue. Glad you liked the single-coils feature, Dave, but if you think our parents raised children stupid enough to get in the middle of a ballroom blitz between single-coil and humbucker devotees, then you don't know us well enough. About this time, we'll just pick up our pints, slope off to a quiet corner and watch the action unfold...**

Woke up this mornin'... NEWS

Rush hour

Iconic prog trio Rush return on June 12 with their first studio album in five years, entitled *Clockwork Angels*. From the two tracks featured on the *Time Machine* 2011: *Live In Cleveland* album and first single *Headlong Flight*, it looks like we're in for an absolute corker. The typically colourful concept follows the story of a young man's exotic quest through a landscape of steampunk, alchemy and carnival to live out his dreams, and it will be followed by a novel written in collaboration with science fiction writer Kevin J Anderson. Check out YouTube for the album trailer or visit www.rush.com for more.



RIP Jim Marshall OBE

(1923-2012)

The legendary amp pioneer and founder of Marshall Amplification Dr Jim Marshall OBE has died of cancer aged 88. Lovingly bestowed with the title of the 'Father Of Loud', Marshall changed the face of rock music when he developed the revolutionary 'Marshall sound' back in the '60s, and along with Seth Lover's humbucker, Les Paul's iconic single-cutaway and Leo Fender's classic solidbodies, Marshall amps are deeply embedded into the fabric of guitar history. He began his career as a drum teacher and sold drum kits in his shop in Hanwell, London but quickly progressed to spearheading his own amp line when guitarists like Ritchie Blackmore and Pete Townshend called upon his services. With the help of assistant Ken Bran and technician Dudley Craven he struck gold with his sixth prototype and by 1964, the first Marshall factory was up and running. Since then virtually every great guitarist has used Marshalls, from Hendrix, Clapton and Page to Slash, Matt Bellamy and Zakk Wylde, ensuring the 'Marshall sound' its legendary status and positioning Jim as one of the true torchbearers for guitar amplification. Marshall celebrate their 50th anniversary this year, and here at *Guitar & Bass* we'll be raising a glass to the iconic and irreplaceable Jim Marshall.

MARTIN GUITARS ON DENMARK STREET

Chris Martin himself was in London to cut the ribbon on the new Tin Pan Alley retail showroom of Martin's UK distributor Westside. It's never been easy for acoustic fans to sample a really wide selection of Martins in Britain but that's all changed now that the old Hank's shop at number 24 has been refitted and packed with the famous American brand, from workmanlike 15 Series guitars right up to Vintage Series models and high-end signature guitars, plus a fine sprinkling of Westside's own UK-only custom-order line. Downstairs there's a selection of Westside's other ranges including Schecter, T-Rex and Mesa Boogie. Contact the new showroom on 0207 836 8374.

LES PAUL AUCTION

Equipment and personal effects belonging to the 'Father Of The Electric Guitar' Les Paul are to go under the hammer

The Les Paul Foundation and Julien's Auctions in Beverly Hills have announced details of the 'Property From The Estate Of Les Paul' auction, due to take place on June 8 and 9. The lots include musical equipment, personal belongings and some stunning guitars from his stellar collection including a 1968 Les Paul Custom Recording Model (estimated $60,000-$80,000), a 1951 Fender Nocaster (est. $40,000-$60,000), a 1927 Gibson L-5 sunburst (est. $10,000-15,000) and a 1952 Gibson Les Paul goldtop (est. $14,000-16,000). Proceeds from the sale will help the Les Paul Foundation in their mission to 'honour and share the life, spirit and legacy of Les Paul by supporting music education, engineering and innovation as well as medical research.' To see the items up for sale or for details on how to bid visit www.juliensauctions.com or www.lespaulfoundation.org.

RIP Bert Weedon OBE

The influential guitarist and author of the bestselling guitar tutorial book *Play In A Day* has died aged 91. Despite having an image at odds with the teen generation, Weedon had a mastery of old-school showmanship and was one of the very first to assimilate an assortment of American guitar styles, from country to rock'n'roll. He was the first British guitarist to have a UK #1 with *Guitar Boogie Shuffle* in 1959, and his books taught a generation of musical legends to play, including Pete Townshend, Eric Clapton, Brian May, Keith Richards, George Harrison and many more. He began his illustrious career playing in big bands and orchestras before taking up a soloist position in the BBC Show Band. As a session guitarist he performed alongside Tommy Steele, Billy Fury, Adam Faith, Marty Wilde and others until he was asked to make a solo album for Top Rank Records, kickstarting a successful solo career. Weedon joined the Queen's honours list when he was awarded an OBE for his outstanding contribution to music in 2001.

Web corner THIS MONTH'S VIRAL GUITAR CLIP

A Strat Is Born: *The Creation of a Fender Stratocaster*

HTTP://BIT.LY/HBQOF8

Ever wondered exactly how the legendary Stratocaster guitar is made? This short non-stop video, filmed at Fender's main US plant in Corona, takes you through the whole magical process from start to finish, providing a fascinating insight into the various steps involved in creating this iconic instrument. Enjoy!

SECRET SHOPPA

BILLY BOWMAN'S MUSIC

COCKERMOUTH, WEST CUMBRIA

CONTACT **01900 826708**

www.billybowmanmusic.co.uk

Cockermouth on the edge of the glorious Lake District is not all walking boots and cagoules. 'There's an abundance of live music here,' says Billy Bowman, owner of Billy Bowman's Music Ltd, one of the largest music shops in the county. 'Festivals and barn dances offer all styles of music most of the year round, so we have to cater for every need. You can buy everything here, from a piccolo to a PA rig.'

Layout

In this two-story building, downstairs leans toward percussion, pianos, sheet music, traditional instruments and acoustic guitars, while level two offers a choice of bass and electric guitars, heads, cabs and combo.

Range of new gear

Plenty of guitars, basses and acoustics from Fender, Ibanez, Westfield, Vintage, Jackson, Tanglewood, Indie, Cort, Overwater, Yamaha, Encore, BC Rich, Patrick Eggle, Brunswick, Freshman, LAG, SX, Ozark, Admira, Almeria and Valencia plus amps Meridian, Vox, Fender, Stagg, Blackstar, Laney and Carlsbro

Secondhand gear

'It comes and goes,' says Billy. 'We also do part exchange if the item is in good working order.' In the amp corner we spotted a cool Peavey Stereo Chorus 400 combo tagged at £150

Best bargain in the shop

Several good deals at the time of our visit: a new Vintage V1004B bass was up for £359, a Fender Precision at £482, a Pawn Shop Mustang at £638 and a choice of guitar/amp starter kits from £99.

Conclusion

Run as a family concern, Billy Bowman's is far more than the traditional music store. Sure, there's a ton of brass instruments, PA and percussion, but it's one of those shops that's well worth a visit for a coffee or a nice relaxed of guitar and amp talk, with some cool guitars to play. Billy is renowned for having a very popular Cumbrian dance band. He also does a fine stand up comedy act as well – so be prepared for an onslaught of fresh but corny gags!

VITAL STATISTICS

Layout	**19**/20
Staff knowledge	**19**/20
Staff helpfulness	**19**/20
Range of new gear	**17**/20
Range of secondhand gear	**14**/20
Parking	**Yes, in the main street**
TOTAL	**88%**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH Vintage

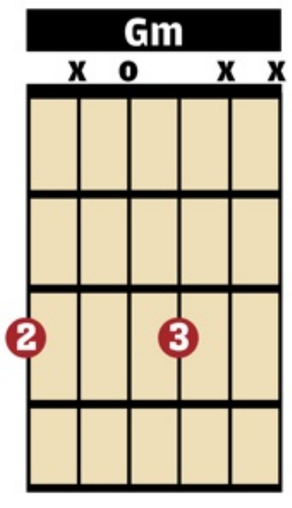
WE'VE BEEN AD...

BUSINESS TIME

This month we bring your attention to a smile-inducing Fender Stratocaster advertisement from the tail end of the '70s. Unless we're sorely mistaken and it's some kind of ill-considered stage gimmick for a genre-spanning geek-rock band, the three men depicted here in white coats and surrounded by electronic devices are in fact intended to be 'scientists'... or as Fender would have it – 'enginEARs' – nice wordplay! The stereotypes are all firmly in place – the afro-headed soul scientist, the long-haired rock scientist sporting a fine moustache, and of course, the lumberjack shirt-wearing dragged-through-a-hedge-backwards country and western scientist – all eyeing up the new Strat like cavemen first setting eyes on the wheel. Okay, okay, we get it, it's a pretty good guitar...

The Lost Chord

A three-note voicing of Gm this month, showing that chords don't need to contain loads of notes to be effective. This shape has a nice bare perfect fifth interval between the bottom two notes and a mournful minor sixth between the top two notes. Shift down a fret then back again and you've got something akin to the Plain White T's *Airplane*.



Tales from the road

Happy Accident

As **Adi Vines** recently discovered, things don't always go right – but sometimes you're rewarded for your failures

I'm a little bit nervous this month. I'm not 100 per cent convinced that what I'm going to confess is in my best interests, as I would like to maintain the impression that I'm ruthlessly efficient and operate with military precision. This, I've been told, is true... the vast majority of the time. But, no matter how careful you are, the gods of misfortune are always ready to strike and you never know when they will pick on you.

Take yesterday, for instance. A slight buzz had been bugging me on an open string of our acoustic, which I diagnosed as a slightly low nut slot. Therefore, before I put it away at the end of the gig, I planned to use the old trick of filling the slot with a couple of drops of superglue. This would harden overnight, and a few minutes with a nut file before the next soundcheck would deal with the problem. This would see me through to our next non-gig day, when I would have enough time to cut a new nut. 'Job's a good 'un,' I thought. But I was about to be betrayed.

Despite performing flawlessly on many other occasions, the first gentle squeeze on the container this time resulted in the tube rupturing and a jet of superglue landing on a fair portion of the fingerboard. Some quick work with a damp cloth removed most of the adhesive, but there is some residue and I now have a few hours careful work with ultra-fine sandpaper to look forward to in the morning.

Still, at least knowledge of this particular mishap was confined to myself and a nearby pyrotechnician, who was alerted to the situation by my spectacular burst of swearing. If we go back to 1998, things were much more public. At the time, I was employed by a band who had just broken the Top 10 and were a popular draw at that summer's festivals. The set featured a section in the middle where the vocalist and guitarist stayed on stage and performed a couple of fragile and beautiful acoustic versions of album tracks.

I took the opportunity of a clear stage to nip on and sort out a couple of things. Unfortunately, in my haste, I had failed to notice that the DI box was not in its usual place. The inevitable happened: after a loud thump, the acoustic guitar went dead. I did not have to hear any of the 35,000 people watching say the actual words to know that they were all going 'Ooh, that roadie has just kicked the guitar lead out...'

> No matter how careful you are, the gods of misfortune are always ready to strike and you never know when

Of course incidents like this are how legends are made and if it wasn't for tales of touring disasters we would have no Spinal Tap. As long as no-one is injured or dies or the incident brings on a crippling crisis of confidence, they can be safely laughed off once a suitable interval has passed and are then ready to pass into the canon of tales to be told at roadcrew gatherings in hotel bars around the world. Besides, a bit of drama can sometimes be useful in getting an audience on your side, and hearing a heartfelt big cheer when a recalcitrant piece of gear springs back to life with a resounding powerchord is an exquisite pleasure as well as a relief. You can quite often get a bigger and better reaction than the band. How's that for job satisfaction?

Adi Vines has worked with Radiohead, the Sex Pistols, the Darkness, Razorlight and others. See www.xselectronics.co.uk

12AT7 Valve FX Loop | 3 x 12AX7 Preamp Tone | Half Power Switchable | 2 X EL84 Valve Power Amp

OUR NEW SIGNATURE
JIM ROOT #4
TERROR HEAD AND 2x12 CABINET

"It's my sound in a portable and compact half stack that's affordable but with loud, saturated rock and metal tone."

- Jim Root -

scan for video, photos, and specs

stone sour

ORANGE AMPLIFICATION

Album reviews

Slash featuring Myles Kennedy and the Conspirators

APOCALYPTIC LOVE

Roadrunner

When you've got a tone as recognisable as Slash's there seems little need to stray too much from old faithful, and this lies in the sweet spot between last year's solo debut and a well-produced *Appetite*-era GN'R. What refreshes the behatted one's schtick is Myles Kennedy's passion-fuelled vox and a kick-ass band. Old-school, but high-flying.

BB King

LIVE AT THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL 2011

Universal

At the ripe old age of 85, BB King is *the* seasoned showman and with Lucille on his lap he's charmed many an audience. This one is no exception. As the show progresses King is joined by Susan Tedeschi, whose sultry tones marry well with hubby Derek Trucks' measured slide. Slash and Ronnie Wood also drop in to add some colour to the pot. Be honest... who could ever tire of BB King?

Joe Bonamassa

DRIVING TOWARDS THE DAYLIGHT

Provogue

Continuing from where *Dust Bowl* left off, Bonamassa explores a rootsy rock'n'blues feel with five slick originals and some gutsy covers that push things forward. We particularly like the album's soulful title track, the rocked-up versions of Robert Johnson's *Stones In My Passway* and Howlin' Wolf's *Who's Been Talkin'* and the Hammond-heavy take of Tom Waits' *New Coat Of Paint*. 15 years on and this is one of his best.

Richard Hawley

STANDING AT THE SKY'S EDGE

Parlophone

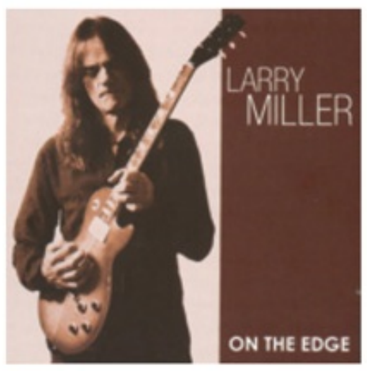
A sea change for Hawley, this is expansive to say the least, with more than a smattering of epic, edge-of-the-cliff moments. Its mesmerising, drowsy feel strangely reminds of the Doors – there's even a smite of Johnny Cash's baritone in there. Layered delays and washed-out reverbs open up a wide open space, while his guitar reaches new levels of abandonment, yet his songs still haunt us as much as ever. Awed, we are.

Larry Miller

ON THE EDGE

Big Guitar

Miller flexes his Marshall tone alluringly with the holy trinity at his disposal: Les Paul, Strat and Tele. There's Gary Moore-esque guitar histrionics (*The Girl That Got Away*), spacious, mournful balladry (*The Wrong Name*) and unfussy grooves (*Road Runner*). Nine elegantly crafted compositions provide sturdy foundations for that deep, expressive, soloing style of his and we, for one, are sold. Blues-rock brilliance.



Santana

SHAPE SHIFTER

Starfaith

36 albums in and Carlos is still more than capable of wooing us with that deft-fingered fluidity and that unmistakable guitar tone. There's only one vocal track here so you get the opportunity to relax into what is a very rewarding listen. We're treated to tracks from 1991-present, from the deep chanting of the album's title track through classic Latin flavours until it closes with father-son solo interactions. Solid.

SNAP JUDGEMENTS

Europe
BAG OF BONES
earMUSIC
The Swedish veterans return with a Kevin Shirley-produced heavy rocker. They're back in the slot too, with stadium-sized tunes and gargantuan riffs

24Pesos
WHEN THE SHIP GOES DOWN
Ourgate
24Pesos offer up a pumping set of lively blues made all the better thanks to nifty grooves, energetic arrangements and killer slide. Recommended

Dion
TANK FULL OF BLUES
Blue Horizon
'Bronx Blues' icon Dion Dimucci's vibey new set is delivered in his husky timbre, with tidy chops and a sweet rhythm section charming to the max. Get stuck in

James Stuart Band
CHANGING LANES
Sighthound
JSB offer hot and heavy blues rock with some statuesque riffery, dextrous fretting and a surefooted command of tone. An assured EP

Dani Wilde
JUICE ME UP
Ruf
A silky smooth touch, watertight fretwork and a sultry vocal that could breathe soul into inanimate objects, make Wilde one gifted young lady. Love it!

Joshua James
BUILD ME THIS
Intelligent Noise
Bewitching, compelling, beautifully-crafted Americana that steadily weaves its spell. Lyrically brooding, vocally heartbreaking, and entirely brilliant

Book of the month

Bringing Metal To The Children

ZAKK WYLDE / ERIC HENDRIKX

Collins

He's rocked with Ozzy, he's fired it up with Black Label Society and he started a worldwide crew of metal-loving 'Beserkers'. This is a handbook on how to live life the Wylde way – crude, intelligent and truly engrossing. The only metal manual.

Gaming gets real

For a while there it looked like a generation of youngsters were going to grow up thinking playing guitar meant tapping coloured buttons in order. Well, it seems Ubisoft have chosen to change all that nonsense with their pioneering new Rocksmith game. Thanks to a 'Real Tone Cable' that transforms analogue into a digital signal, guitarists can now plug a real six-string into their X-Box, Playstation 3 or PC/Mac and learn to play without losing the video game format. It's suitable for all skill levels and features over 50 well-known tracks to play along with as well as 'Guitarcade' mini-games to help hone the various techniques. There's a handy riff repeater for nailing those licks too. Visit www.rocksmith.com for more.

Blackbird singing in the dead of night

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all your life, you were only waiting for this moment to be free

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Woke up this mornin'... NEWS

Musikmesse 2012

Frankfurt Musikmesse arrives again, and the guitar industry grabs the opportunity to woo the world with its latest line-up of gear. *Guitar & Bass* headed over to Europe's largest music equipment fair to find out what surprises the coming year holds for guitar lovers...

The doors open to another fine feast of dazzling new guitar gear for us to get our picks into this year

Fender's American Standard Strat gets an upgrade with Custom Shop Fat '50s pickups

A new body contour and new pickups for the American Standard Telecaster

The 2012 Les Paul Standard is enhanced by Burstbucker Pro Split Coils humbuckers

The all-tube Butcher from Peavey brought the British hard rock sound to Frankfurt

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Raising the STANDARD

Gibson's Les Paul range – crowned by the '58-'60 Standards, now among the most valuable guitars in the world – were originally unloved. **Richard Mann** charts a tale of failure, controversy and resurrection...

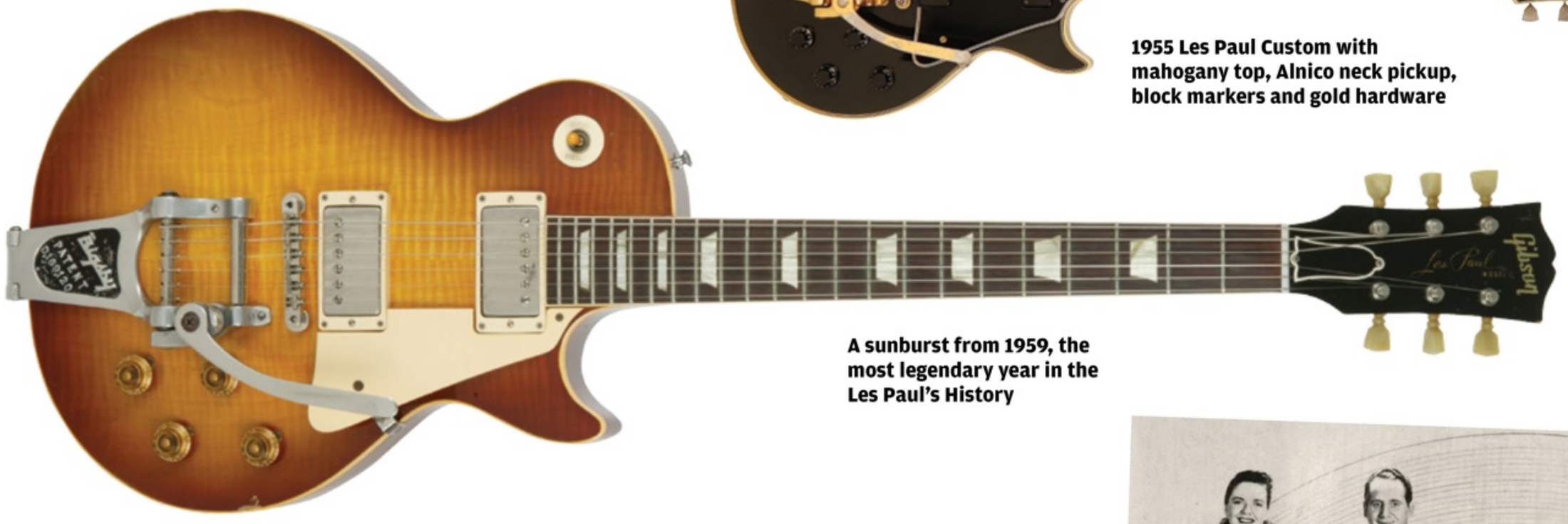
It's now a granddaddy icon, but the Gibson Les Paul was once a 'difficult child'. The sunburst models of 1958-1960 are now the most collectable production electric guitars in history, but some say it is their rarity rather than any great specific quality that make that so. Only eight years after it debuted, Gibson halted production of the single-cutaway Les Paul. Why? Because the guitars weren't popular enough.

The Gibson Les Paul Standard remains a phenomena, but was originally an oddity. Gibson launched the Les Paul Model – the goldtop – in 1952 as its first-ever solidbody. In the close-knit guitar-making community, rivals but also friends, it caused a stir. Then-Gibson president Ted McCarty said he even received a disparaging phone call from fellow manufacturer Fred Gretsch.

As McCarty told *Vintage Guitar* magazine: 'Fred asked me, "Why did you ever do that? This means anybody who's got a bandsaw can make a guitar!"'

A '54 goldtop Les Paul Model, the very best of the P90 period with the stop tailpiece

1955 Les Paul Custom with mahogany top, Alnico neck pickup, block markers and gold hardware



A sunburst from 1959, the most legendary year in the Les Paul's History

Photos: www.harris-hire.co.uk

The Gibson Les Paul Model was initially no real innovation. Its outline was the same as the ES-295 semi-acoustic and hardware parts were drawn from Gibson's existing models. Les Paul was the endorsee, yes, but he arguably had meagre involvement with the design. Ted McCarty claimed it was his work: 'We designed that guitar because Leo Fender was having success making solidbody guitars. We worked about a year and came up with what we thought was a very fine guitar. Then I asked: "Who's going to sell it for us?"

'Then I said, "What about Les Paul?" because at the time, he and Mary Ford were at the top of the charts. I knew Les, and had been trying to get him to play Gibson guitars, because he was an Epiphone man.' Les and his partner Mary Ford liked the guitar, but as McCarty later claimed, '[Les] never saw it before I took it down there [to him].' But with Les Paul onboard, with his all-important name on the headstock and signed to a five-year contract, Gibson was ready to market the most un-Gibson of Gibson guitars. Les later claimed he was paid a five per cent royalty for every guitar sold.

Burst bubble

After the 'goldtop' Les Paul Model debuted in 1952, the all-black Custom followed in 1954. There were a few renowned early adopters of the goldtop – Freddie King famously played one, and later inspired Eric Clapton to buy a Les Paul. Carl Perkins toted a goldtop. But sales were lower than Gibson hoped. In 1953, Gibson shipped 2245 goldtop Les Pauls. Not bad – but by 1957, sales were down to 598, even though the guitar was now armed with designer Seth Lover's humbuckers.

So Gibson changed tack, and in 1958 introduced the new 'cherry sunburst' Standard model, harking back to Gibson's most famous finish option and one that spoke to traditionalists with its echoes of luxury archtop jazz guitars and mandolins. The goldtop version, although it sold in relatively healthy numbers, was discontinued. Under the headline 'Les Paul in Cherry Red', the *Gibson Gazette* boasted, 'A beautiful red cherry sunburst is the news here! This guitar now has a rich, rubbed appearance that cannot be equalled at any price... this instrument is a true beauty.'

'Fred Gretsch said, "Why ever did you do that? This means anybody with a bandsaw can make a guitar!"' – Ted McCarty

Cherry was a new finish for Gibson solidbodies: single-cutaway Les Paul Juniors had a yellow-to-brown sunburst. And some of the maple of the new Standards certainly boasted some astonishing figuring. But Gibson still reserved its best maple for its up-market archtops, and it didn't prioritise the marketing of the cherry Les Paul Standards.

Yet the revamped finish failed to appeal enough, either. Not one famous player was spotted with a 'burst in the '50s. Sales did slightly climb to 643 in '59 – the original sunburst's highpoint – but the figures increasingly told Gibson that the Les Paul Standard was not popular. The evidence was clear: the single pickup Les Paul Junior was selling four times as much. It seems bizarre, as a Standard in '59 cost $265, while a sunburst Fender Stratocaster was $289.

So why did the world's now-most collectible guitar fail? The 'burst was simply not a guitar

Who needs Photoshop? Les Paul and Mary Ford helping to promote the new guitar

of its time. For all its crafted beauty, the sunburst Les Paul was akin to a Gibson archtop: it looked back, rather than forward (certainly compared to the outrageous Gibson's Flying V and Explorer, the two production versions of the experimental Moderne series, also launched in 1958). And, it may seem sacrilegious, but maybe Les Paul was not the ideal endorsee? Les Paul played jazzy pop in a husband/wife act, albeit exquisitely, but he was not the rebellious draw of burgeoning rock'n'rollers such as Buddy Holly, who favoured Stratocasters.

Shape shifting

In 1960, Gibson took action, because it needed to. The company banished the single-cut LP and under Ted McCarty's design direction introduced the SG ('Solid Guitar') Les Paul. SGs fitted with a vibrato were – on the surface – more akin to a Fender, unlike the archtop-inspired LP. But controversy followed. The dramatic redesign, Les Paul later claimed, was done without his knowledge, and when he saw the SG, he asked for his name to be removed from the instrument and parted ways with Gibson. ➔

Bloomfield BURSTS OUT

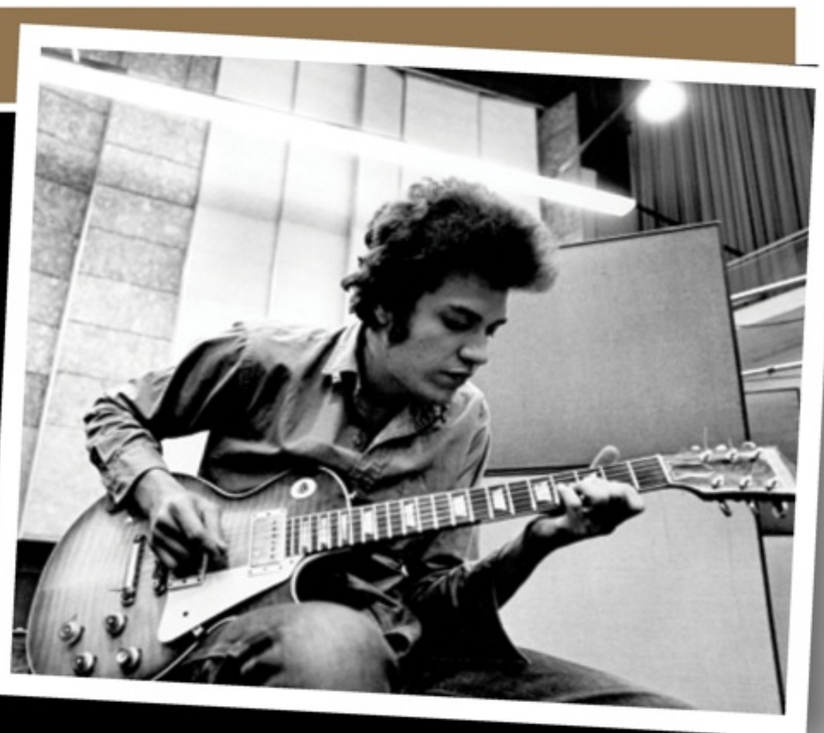


Photo: Michael Ochs Archive/Getty

In the UK, it is Eric Clapton's playing on the 'Beano' album that is credited with bringing the Standard back – but in the US, George Gruhn credits Michael Bloomfield as 'kick-starting the whole vintage market'. Influenced by Muddy Waters, Bloomfield played a '56 Gold Top with Bob Dylan (on *Highway 61 Revisited*) and in the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. It was 1967 before he acquired a Standard. Bloomfield got his '59 from guitar scholar and technician Dan Erlewine: Bloomfield traded his goldtop plus $100. You can hear it prominently on Bloomfield's next project with the Electric Flag.

Bloomfield's sunburst '59 was again to the fore on 1968's collaborative album, *Super Session,* by Bloomfield, Al Kooper and Stephen Stills, and on *The Live Adventures Of Mike Bloomfield And Al Kooper*. Bloomfield was never a major star, but tonehounds were listening.

George Gruhn, a friend of Bloomfield, recalls: 'If I [earlier] found a sunburst Les Paul with humbucking pickups and the Tun-O-Matic bridge, I was told that that was the wrong colour, that humbucking pickups sounded syrupy and sickly sweet, and that the Tune-O-Matic bridge killed sustain. It was not long after that, however, that Mike switched to using a sunburst, and the players who had claimed that those were the wrong instruments could not remember having said such a thing within a few weeks after Bloomfield had made the transition!

'Some argue that Eric Clapton rather than Mike Bloomfield popularised the sunburst Les Paul, but before Bloomfield played electric guitar there was no vintage electric guitar market. When he picked up the blackguard Tele, everybody wanted one. When he switched to the goldtop Les Paul, everybody switched. When he switched to the sunburst, everybody wanted one. Clapton was playing a sunburst at that time, but the demand shifted to sunbursts when Bloomfield shifted.'

Bloomfield was a little careless with guitars: his '59 lost its pickup selector cap, and its damaged volume and tone controls were replaced, but completely mismatched. Bloomfield eventually 'abandoned' his Les Paul in Canada, most likely at a gig in Vancouver in '74 or '75. Legend has it that Bloomfield, increasingly troubled by addiction, simply left before completing the date and the club owner kept his guitar to compensate his losses. Bloomfield's famed '59 was later sold to an anonymous collector.

The 68 Custom 'reissue' with maple top, two humbuckers, amp knobs and shallower headstock pitch

Save for the headstock pitch and mirror-top knobs, the Standard of 1968 was fairly faithful to a '56

In 1969 the Standard became the very different Deluxe with mini humbuckers. This one is from 1970

Whatever the truth, Gibson continued to use 'Les Paul' logos and truss rod covers until 1963. The SG Les Paul was never a 'Les Paul' guitar at all. From 1963, with 'LP' inventory used up, the guitar has simply been the SG.

Dramatic though Gibson's redesign was, it worked. Shipping figures for the SG from '61 to '63 were 1662, 1449, and 1445 – nearly threefold the 'bursts sold from '58 to '60.

Chris Trigg, owner of Vintage & Rare (London/Bath guitar dealers) tells *Guitar & Bass*: 'Early SGs are great guitars. Early SGs with PAFs sound cracking, but they're a completely different construction... you can't compare them to a 'burst. A 'burst is obviously worth a lot more than an early '60s SG Les Paul, but there was a big price explosion a few years ago when the value of SGs increased enormously.

'But then the popularity of SGs dropped off, so they're actually probably one of the best value vintage guitars in the market now. I'm sure their value will rise again. The SG Les Pauls [with Les's name on the headstock] were only made for a short period of time, they had PAF pickups, and that's all significant. They had really good quality wood. That's a major part of why they sound so good. You just can't get that quality of wood anymore.'

'It was the best Les Paul I ever had – magnificent. I never really found one as good as that' – Eric Clapton

On a commercial level, certainly, it seemed that Gibson had made an astute business decision. 1970 was a boom year for the Gibson SG, with 12,914 sold.

The '60s sunburst revival

Les Paul sunbursts were sold for a song in the early 1960s. As with cars, phones and TVs in 2012, who'd want a discontinued 'unpopular' model? As Nashville-based guitar guru George Gruhn notes, 'A 1959 Les Paul was [then] a $100 used guitar.' And indeed it was – until stars starting playing them.

Some Les Paul fans forget this, but Keith Richards was one of the first stars to tote a sunburst. His most fabled was a 1959. That guitar was bought new in 1961 from Farmers Music Store in Luton by John Bowen from the English band Mike Dean and the Kinsmen. Bowen had a Bigsby fitted at Selmer's music store in London before swapping it for another guitar in '62. Soon afterwards, Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones saw it in Selmer's and bought it.

Richards used the Les Paul extensively in the Stones' '64-'66 days. Appearances on TV shows *Ready Steady Go* and, in the US, *The Ed Sullivan Show* seared eyeballs. Classic songs played on the guitar, such as *Little Red Rooster*, *The Last Time* and *Satisfaction* seared ears.

Just as Keith was putting down his Les Paul

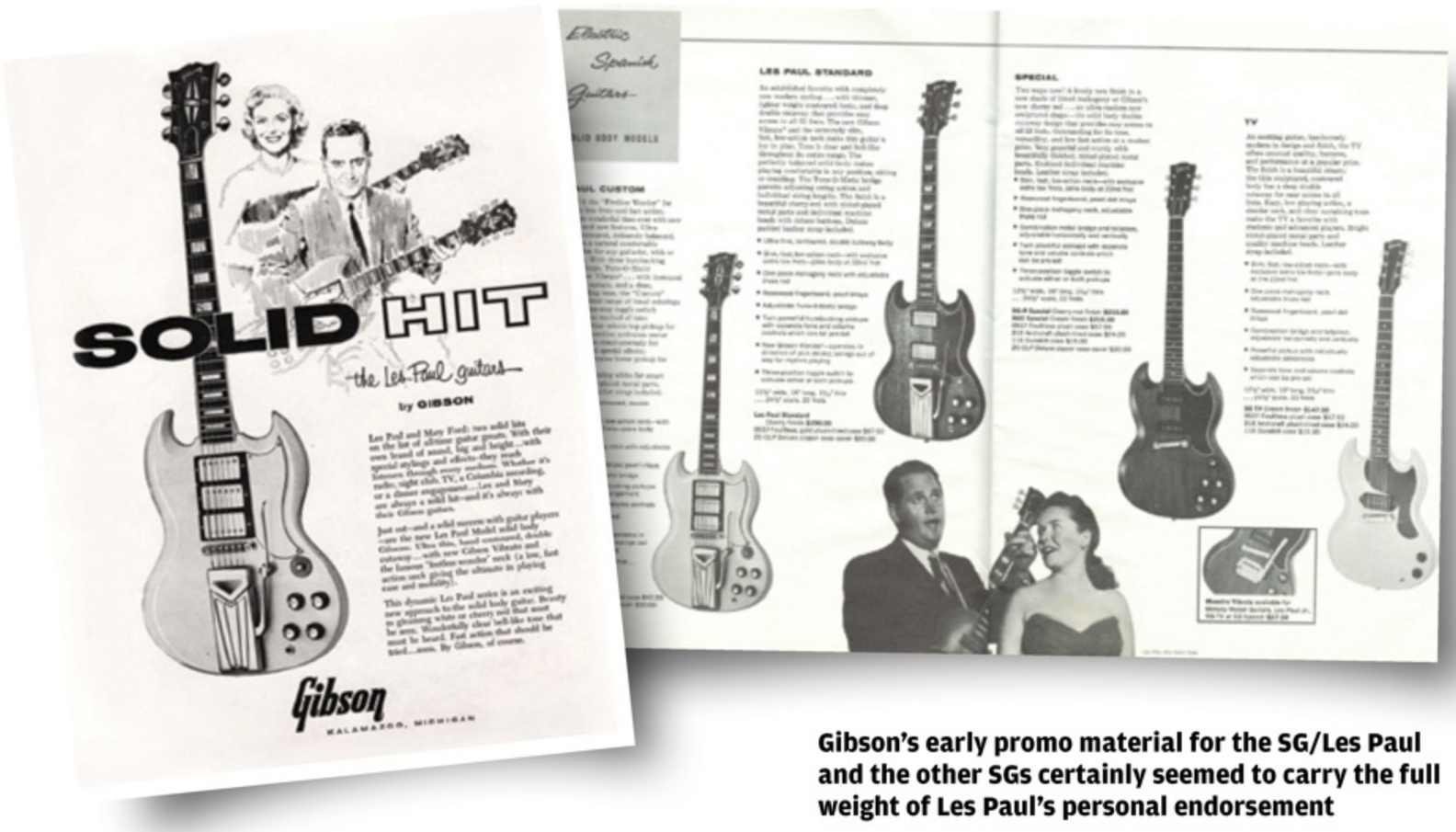
GIBSON LES PAUL TIMELINE

1952
Gibson launches the Les Paul Model (aka the 'goldtop', with mahogany body/maple cap, trapeze bridge/ tailpiece and P90s

1954
The black all-mahogany Custom with gold-plated hardware and wrapover bridge debuts. The Les Paul Junior and TV are also launched

1955-57
The Tune-O-Matic bridge and Seth Lover's humbuckers are introduced. In '57, the Custom is awarded a set of three humbuckers

1958
Gibson chooses to delete the original goldtop finish from its Les Paul line as sales falter. The 'cherry sunburst' Les Paul Standard replaces it



Gibson's early promo material for the SG/Les Paul and the other SGs certainly seemed to carry the full weight of Les Paul's personal endorsement

sunburst in '66, Eric Clapton was picking one up. Clapton's tone on the Blues Breakers' 'Beano' album – a 1960 sunburst played through a Marshall JTM 45 – became fabled.

Clapton later told *Guitar Player* it was 'the best Les Paul I ever had... just a regular sunburst Les Paul that I bought in one of the shops in London right after I'd seen Freddie King's album cover of *Let's Hide Away And Dance Away*, where he's playing a goldtop.

'It had humbuckers and it was almost brand new – it even had the original case with that lovely purple velvet lining. Just magnificent. I never really found one as good as that. I do miss that one.' Clapton's favourite Les Paul was stolen from an early Cream rehearsal in 1966.

Les Paul sunbursts, with their low production numbers, were super-rare in the UK. In the US, it was Mike Bloomfield who helped bring the model back to life. Bloomfield played a goldtop with Bob Dylan on *Highway 61 Revisited* and on 1965's *The Paul Butterfield Blues Band* album, which pre-dated the 'Beano' album by six months. But it was later, when Bloomfield started playing a 'burst, that the '58-'60 guitars became sought-after again.

George Gruhn tells *Guitar & Bass*: 'Mike Bloomfield had a profound impact on popularising Les Pauls. By that time, Les Paul's popularity was no longer at its peak. People who were playing country as well as rock'n'roll wanted guitars that weighed less and had a more twangy sound. The Beach Boys and The Ventures, for example, were not looking for the sunburst Les Paul-type of tone.'

But budding electric bluesmen listening to Bloomfield and ➔

Horns Of Plenty: THE SG

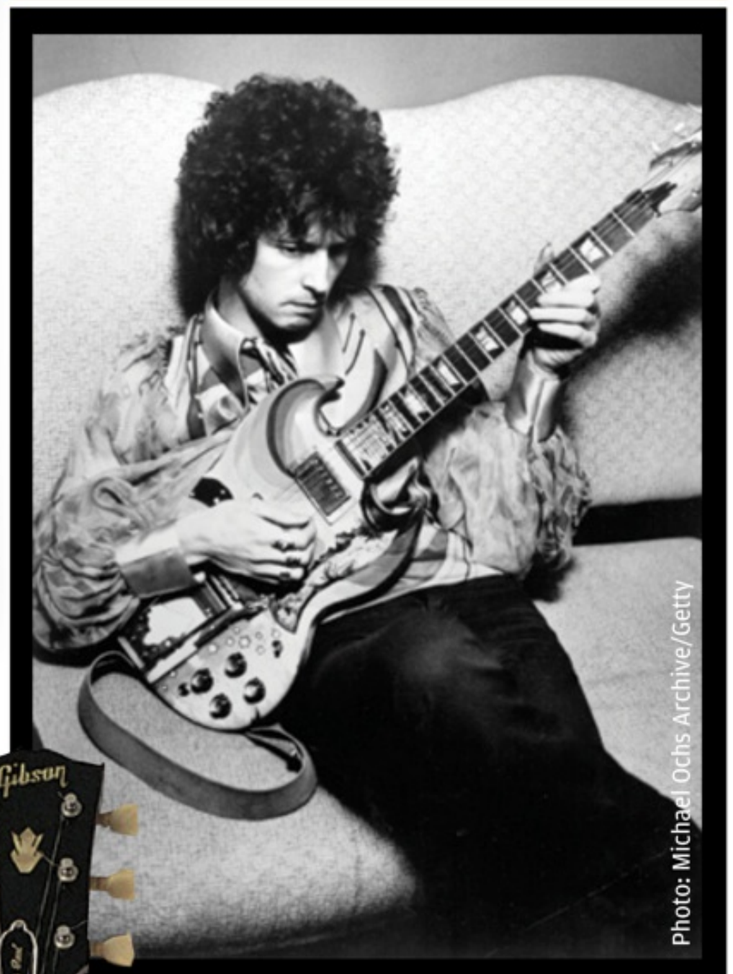


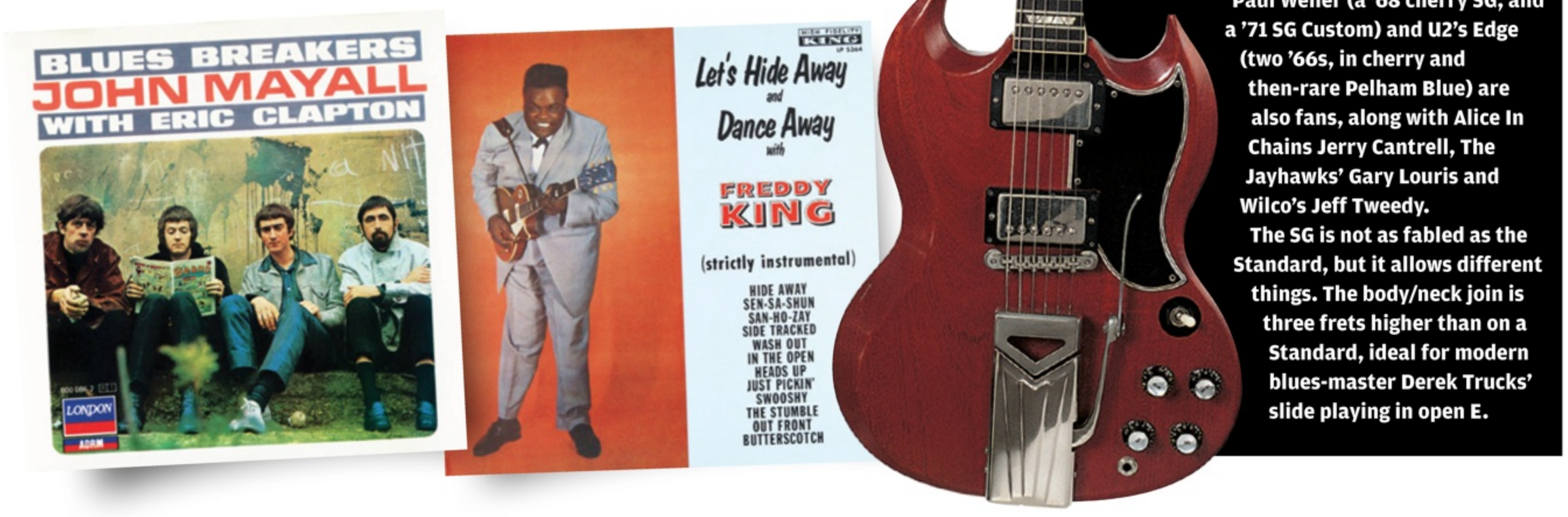
Photo: Michael Ochs Archive/Getty

Eric Clapton in Cream, Carlos Santana at Woodstock and Frank Zappa all proved the SG could wail. The Doors' Robbie Krieger proved its versatility, but partly due to his own raga and jazz-influenced playing – as did George Harrison. Lynyrd Skynyrd's Gary Rossington used his '60s SG to write many a southern rock classic, as did Duane Allman on a '62 SG Les Paul.

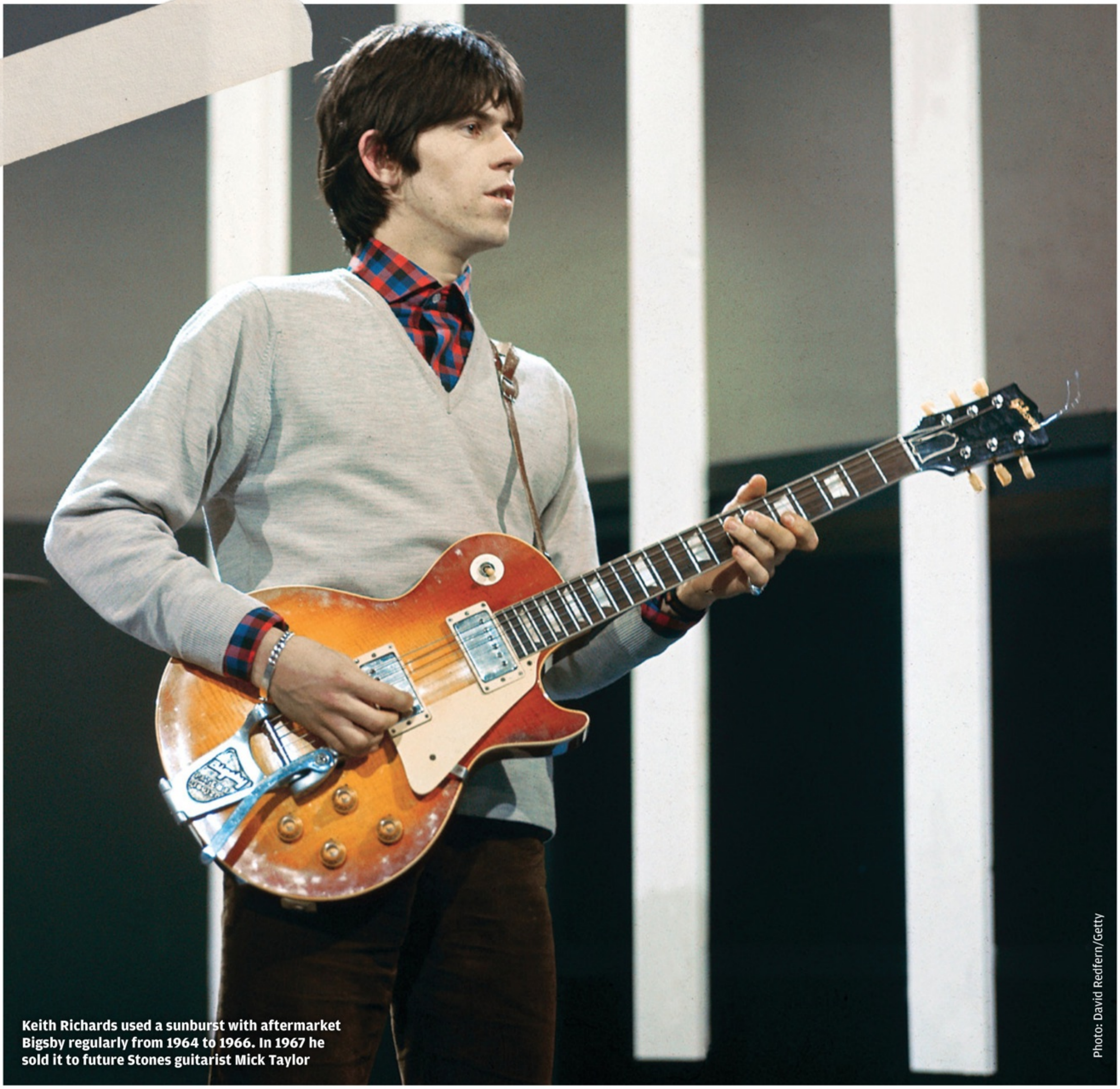
Pete Townshend and Tony Iommi also proved this simpler 'slab' of a guitar was also perfect for brick-hard riffing. Angus Young made it his signature guitar – and its slender build no doubt helped the 5'2" AC/DC man. He says, 'I tried the Standard, but it was too heavy. Hip displacement!' The SG's lightness may also be why the SG appeals to Radiohead's Thom Yorke (5'4").

Paul Weller (a '68 cherry SG, and a '71 SG Custom) and U2's Edge (two '66s, in cherry and then-rare Pelham Blue) are also fans, along with Alice In Chains Jerry Cantrell, The Jayhawks' Gary Louris and Wilco's Jeff Tweedy.

The SG is not as fabled as the Standard, but it allows different things. The body/neck join is three frets higher than on a Standard, ideal for modern blues-master Derek Trucks' slide playing in open E.



1960	1961	1962	1964-66	1968
Gibson halts production of the Standard, with sales still disappointing. The Junior was selling four times as many at 40 per cent of the price	The SG Les Paul with a thin, sculpted body and vibrato options, and designed without Les's input, replaces the single-cut shape	Les Paul's initial contract with Gibson ends. 'The neck was too skinny, not enough wood... it wasn't my design.' His name is removed from SGs in '63	Keith Richards, Eric Clapton and Mike Bloomfield become renowned for playing original single-cut '50s Les Pauls	Gibson reintroduces the Les Paul Standard in gold, with the Custom and SG also continuing. The Standard has stayed in production ever since



Keith Richards used a sunburst with aftermarket Bigsby regularly from 1964 to 1966. In 1967 he sold it to future Stones guitarist Mick Taylor

Photo: David Redfern/Getty

Clapton *were* seeking that overdriven yet supple tone. The Les Paul's rebirth was, in reality, all a happy accident. Seth Lover didn't design humbuckers for searing blues, but for warm jazz tones: the Les Paul was conceived as a luscious jazz/pop guitar. That was until the likes of Keef, Clapton and Bloomfield plugged one into an overdriven amp for a tone that no Strat could then match.

Chris Trigg adds, 'They're not expensive just because they are old, nor because Gibson didn't make many of them. They are genuinely great guitars. Some of the best music was played on them. When you get one – it might not even be the flamiest one – they are hard to beat.'

The Return of The Standard

Gibson soon became aware that these 'failed' Les Pauls were back in vogue. In 1967, they issued a statement: 'if you're offered a [new] guitar, and told it's a Les Paul, be very wary.'

Gibson's decision to recommence production of the Les Paul Standard in 1968 was, again, simple economic sense. No-one famous was involved in the rebirth, but then-VP Marc Calucci drove the project forward. Les Paul agreed to come back as endorsee. Original designer Ted McCarty? By then, he had left Gibson to join Bigsby.

Yet George Gruhn believes that, maybe, Gibson made a mistake. The guitar was still desirable, but the marketing was perhaps out of touch. He tells *Guitar & Bass:* 'When Gibson reintroduced the models in 1968 they [again] used Les Paul as their spokesperson and introduced what *he* wanted rather than what R&B players had been demanding. I find this curious, since Les's popularity by 1968 had diminished. Most of the people who wanted a Les Paul guitar barely knew who Les Paul was in 1968. They couldn't have cared less about his style of music.'

But did it matter? 'Les Paul' was now more of a brand than a guitar hero, and branding is more powerful than any individual. The Les Paul Standard returned in 1968 – initially as a goldtop only, alongside the black Custom.

Les Pauls in the '60s and '70s

In 1969 Gibson parent company Chicago Musical Instruments was taken over by Norlin Inc. During the 'Norlin Era', Les Pauls were altered: there was a change to the neck volute, which was prone to breaking. Neck woods were eventually changed from mahogany to three-piece maple. The body switched from a one-piece mahogany with a maple top into multiple slabs of mahogany with multi-pieced maple tops.

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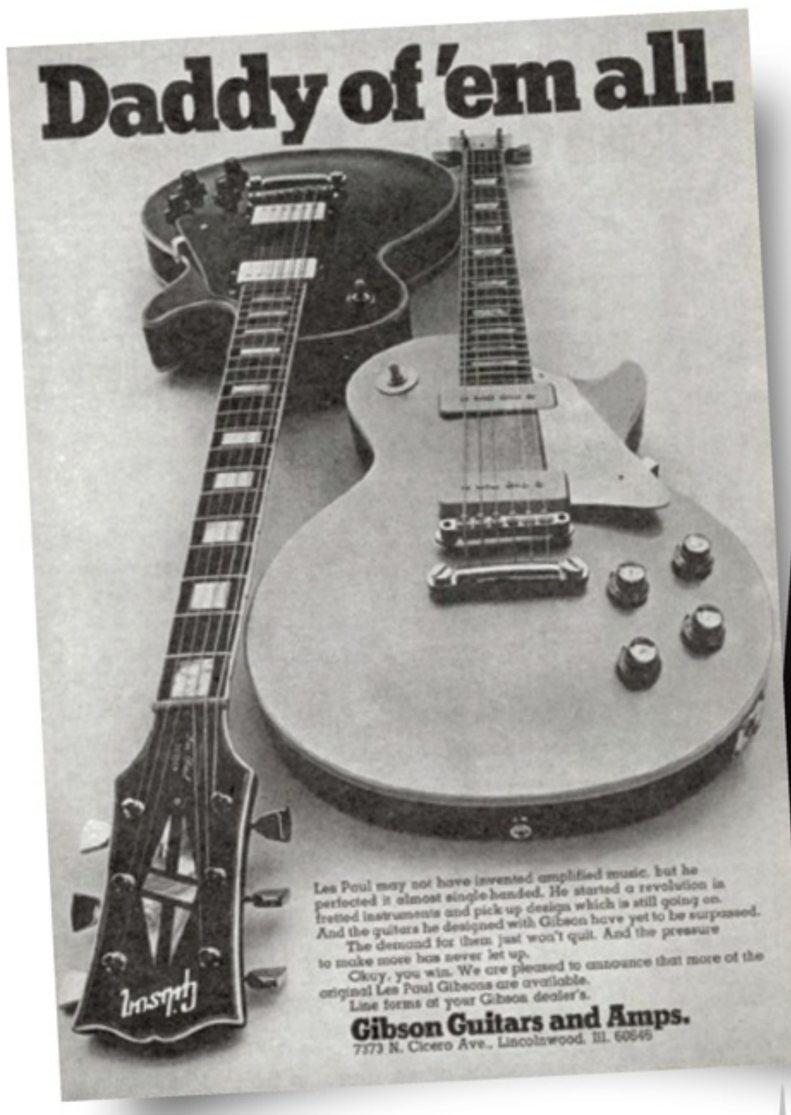
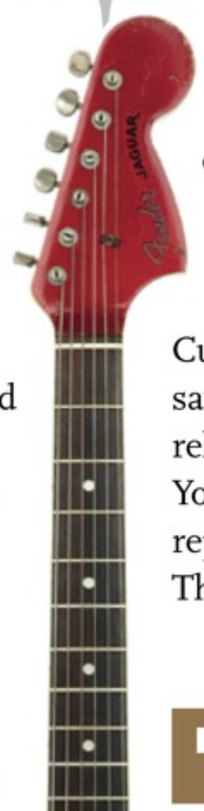


The great Les Paul, a faithful Gibson user all through his career

'New Gibsons – or Martins or Fenders – are all better than in the 1970s. Age alone does not make something good' – George Gruhn



'The first ones are great, and collectable,' says Chris Trigg. 'But I personally prefer the '68s coming into '69s. You still get single-piece [mahogany] necks on some of those, and they are really good. But I've had '70s models with three-piece necks and the changed volute, and they can also be great. Early '70s Les Pauls with the mahogany neck remain highly collectable. Early '76, with the maple neck... that's when they became hit and miss, to me.'

'New Gibsons – or Martins or Fenders – are all better than what they made in the '70s,' opines George Gruhn. 'Age alone does not make something good.'

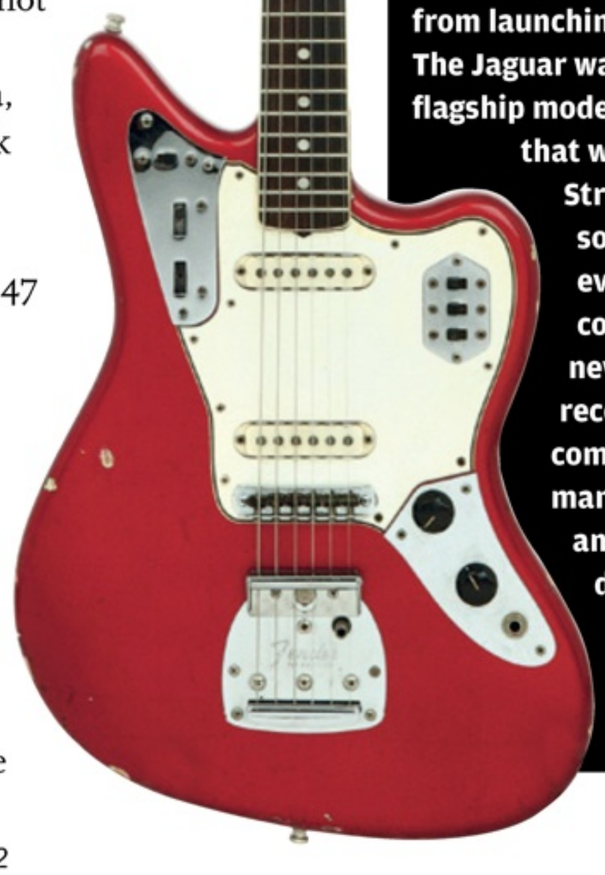
But in the modern era, Gibson has brought back 'bursts as originally conceived and built. In 1958, a Standard cost $247 – equivalent to $1950 in 2012. The price of a reissue 1958 Les Paul 'Plaintop' Reissue in 2012 is $2000. Pretty much the same.

Collectable Les Pauls continue to be redefined. Trigg says: 'There are a lot of people who swear by early '80s Les Pauls. The early VOSs, before 2008, had great tops, before Gibson chambered them. I'm sure they will be desirable.' Of course, there is a *great* guitar and simply a collectable guitar. Current Gibson CEO Henry J Juszkiewicz says of original 'bursts, 'I think the value is related to scarcity. There are only 300 or so. You could pay that for ink blot art which is reproducible and just has a signature on it. The value is in the marketplace.'

And are Gibson now building even better guitars? 'Absolutely,' says Juszkiewicz. 'There's no doubt in my mind. With our vintage reproductions, we target them to be the very best ones ever made. Modern equipment gives tolerances that just weren't available in the '50s.'

But an *original* '58-'60 Standard? Rarity, antiquity, 'mojo', fable and fame ensure the 'burst remains the world's most covetable guitar. If you don't have a small fortune to spend, you won't get to touch one. Or as Nigel Tufnel might say, 'don't even *look* at it.'

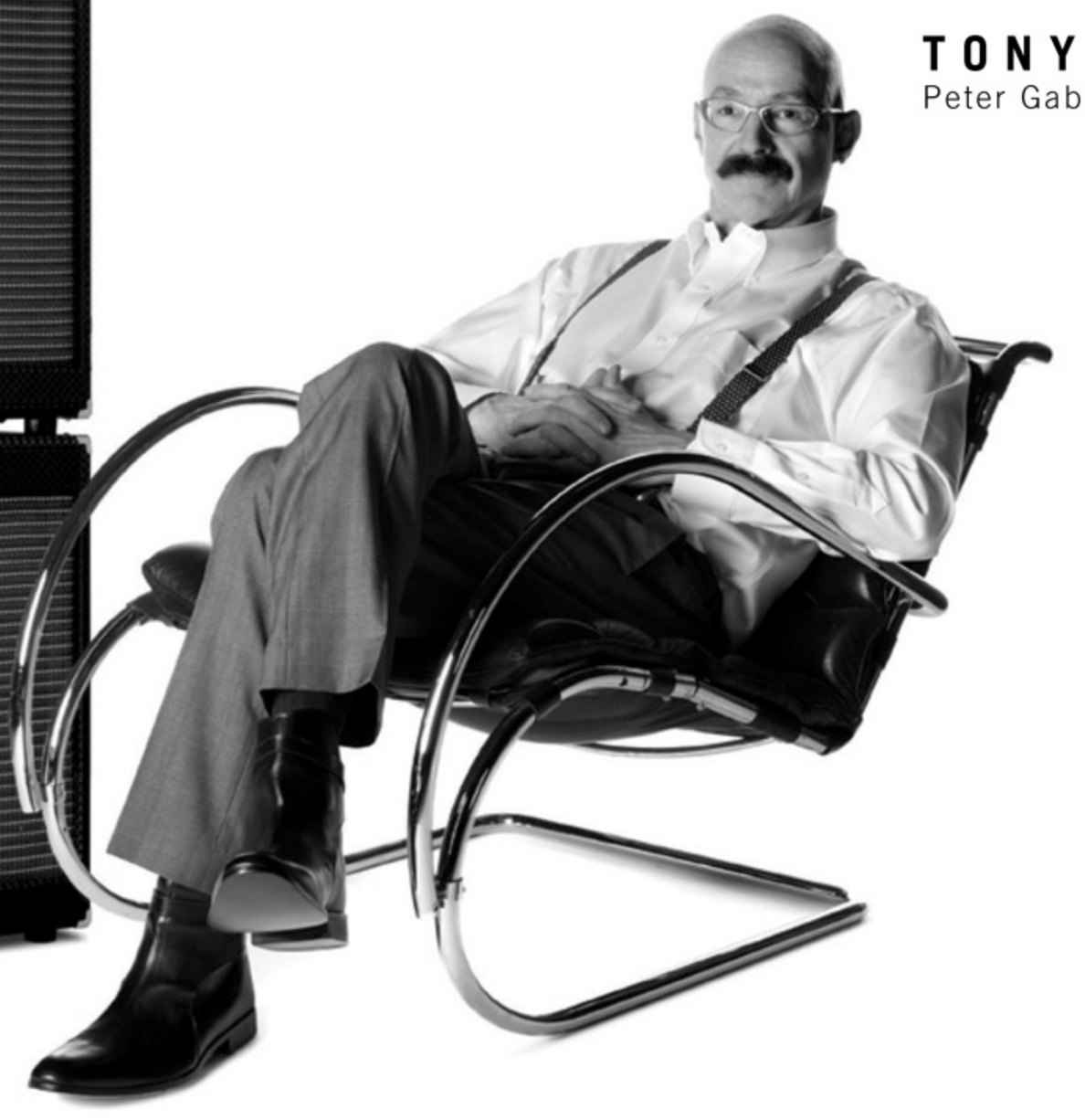
The Jaguar: FENDER'S OWN 'FAILURE'



Gibson's great rival Fender was not immune from launching guitars that originally 'failed'. The Jaguar was launched in 1962 as Fender's flagship model and was intened as the guitar that would eventually eclipse the Stratocaster. 'One of the finest solidbody electric guitars that has ever been offered to the public,' cooed Fender's 1962 brochure. 'The new Jaguar is unhesitatingly recommended to those desiring complete instrument versatility.' With many switching options, a new vibrato and space-age looks, the Jaguar was designed to take Fenders to a higher level – but, surprisingly, it initially only appealed to burgeoning surf sceners: the Surfaris, the Chantays and the Trashmen played Jaguars, and the Beach Boys' Carl Wilson was an endorsee. However, as with the Les Paul Standard, sales remained frustratingly low. After various cosmetic changes, Fender halted the Jaguar's production in 1975. Less sumptuous and less rare than a '58-'60 Les Paul Standard, it didn't become a collectable but a 'pawn shop' staple. This most-complex of Fenders was later bought secondhand by grungers (Nirvana, Sonic Youth, J Mascis) who couldn't afford a 'posh' Strat – Kurt Cobain bought his '65 for $100 from the *LA Recycler* free-ad newspaper.

The Jaguar was reintroduced in 1999, after Cobain, John Frusciante, Billy Corgan, Graham Coxon and others had made it an alt-rock object of desire. One of its latest incarnations is the Fender Johnny Marr Jaguar Signature.

PF-500
PF-410HLF NEW!
PF-115LF NEW!



TONY LEVIN
Peter Gabriel, King Crimson

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Open Season

Recording the band in one take. Inviting guests to just do their thing. Selling a bunch of stuff he doesn't use. Is the dedicated and particular Eric Johnson starting to loosen up? Interview by **Martyn Casserly**

For nearly three decades now Eric Johnson has been known as a player with exquisite taste, enviable talent, and an almost pathological attention to detail in all elements of his equipment. So it comes as somewhat of a surprise that while we listen to his lazy Texan drawl recount the experiences of recording his last album, it seems like he's had something of an epiphany. To borrow the title from one of the songs on the album, 'a change has come to me'.

'Yeah, it did,' Johnson admits, 'and it's changing even more now. I think a lot of it is just taking a good look at what I'm doing, where I am, and where I think I need to put some emphasis.'

While recording *Up Close*, his sixth solo studio effort, Johnson loosened the bonds on his clinically precise playing and embraced a more live feel, often prompted by friends joining him on the sessions.

'Steve Miller just happened to be around... Jonny Lang too. It just kinda went that if a friend was in town I'd call them up and see if they wanted to come over. I think it made me more malleable. If somebody wanted to sing I was like okay, great... let them sing or do a solo here. It was a little bit of a wake-up call, because on the tracks where I did that I started hearing an interesting, animated kind of spirit to it, and I thought, well, I've just got to get into this more.

'Since that record I've recorded a couple of new tunes, and we kind of cut them live in the studio. I played them for some people and they went "Well, it's not quite as polished as some of your stuff... but it's much more enjoyable to listen to,"' Eric laughs. 'I thought "Okay, I guess I'm on the right track."'

It's not just his attitude to playing that Johnson is addressing: he's also delving deeper into his famous technique to see what adjustments can be made.

'It's like reviewing the whole thing, seeing what you're doing well and finding something you could make stronger. It's that stronger thing that I'm looking at – trying to capture that essence and spontaneousness. If you spend time with your instrument and do your homework in as far as practicing, developing your technique and your performance level, it frees you up later to take more chances. You're more comfortable with everything under your fingertips.'

Johnson's reputation as a perfectionist has seen some pretty strange urban legends spread among the guitar community. We wondered if he now saw his previous attention to detail as something that might of held him back rather than released him...

> *'I recorded some live tracks and people say they're more enjoyable to listen to'*

'There are really two sides to it,' he says. 'I mean, it helps a lot, but at the same time it can get in the way. If I polarise myself in either of those ways then I'm not seeing the full picture. If I was to go, "Oh, that's totally a hindrance," and I suddenly didn't care anymore about detail or quality or integrity or hitting a high watermark, then I'm missing something. But if I care so much that I don't get enough of a live performance, then I'm missing something too. I think it's really ➔

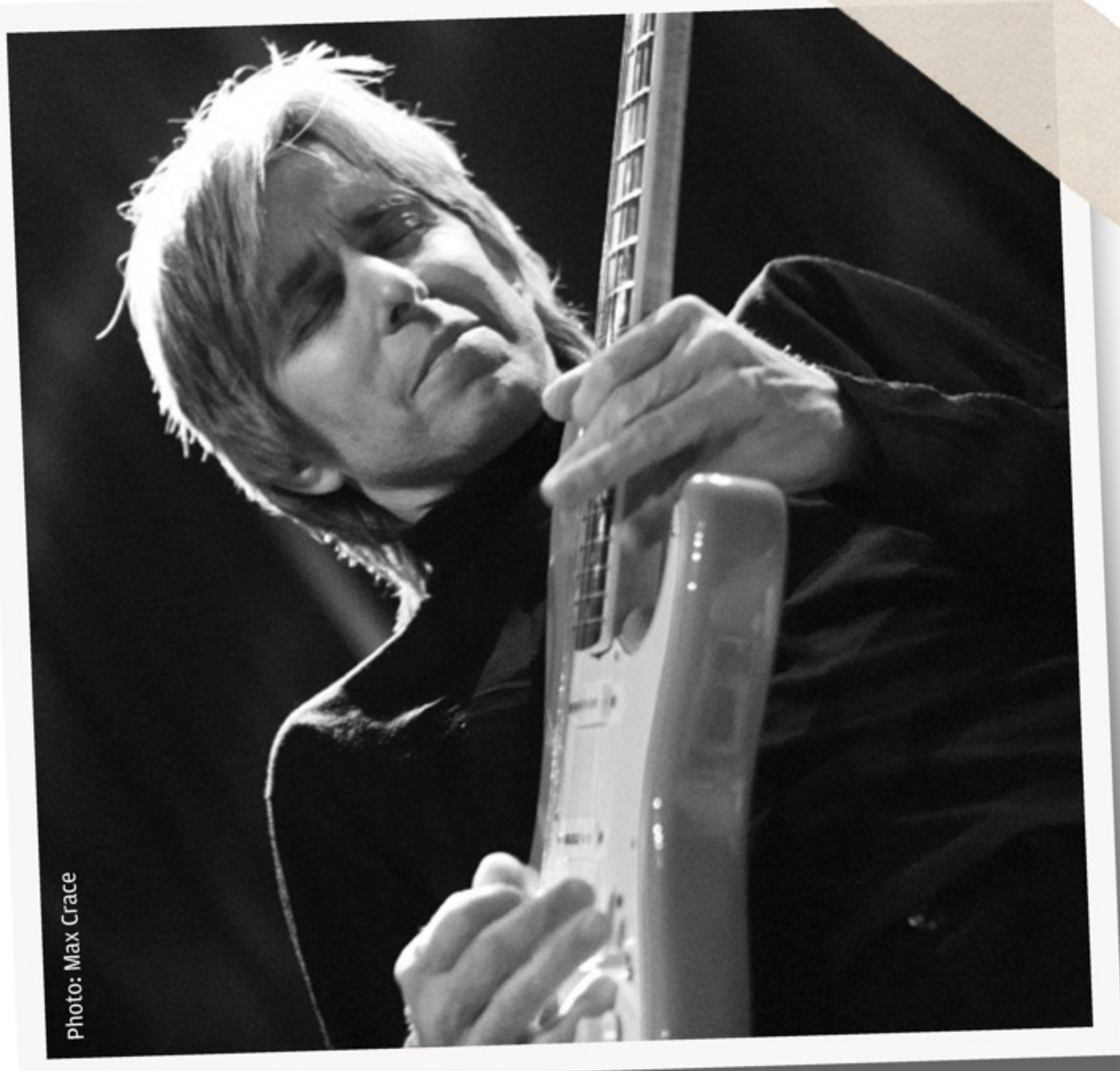

Photo: Max Crace

Gear

Guitars
'57 Strat, Fender EJ Strats, '64 Gibson SG, EJ signature Martin

Amps
Two Fender Twin Reverbs, vintage 100W & 50W Marshalls

Effects
Butler Tube Driver, Tube Screamer, E-H Memory Man, TC Stereo Chorus, Fuzz Face, Toadworks Barracuda flanger, Vox wah, Boss DD-2 delay, Echoplex

Listen up

ERIC JOHNSON
Up Close
(2010)
Johnson's newest offering features his usual eclectic mix of blues, rock, country, pop and psychedelia, plus collaborations with Steve Miller, Sonny Landreth, Jimmie Vaughan and Jonny Lang

ERIC JOHNSON
Ah Via Musicom
(1990)
Probably the essential Johnson recording, containing *Cliffs Of Dover*, which won him a Grammy for Best Instrumental Performance. The album eventually went on to become a platinum-seller

And another thing...

Due to certain legal complications, Eric Johnson's first album *Seven Worlds* was recorded in 1976 and 1977 but not released until Eric acquired the master tapes for himself 20 years later.

how you use that energy, how you use the musicality of keeping it at a high integrity.'

The fruits of this introspection is a man who seems to be really enjoying his playing. 'I'm starting to hear some things, voicings and chords, trying to get a little freer,' he adds. 'The sky's the limit. If you reposition yourself as a student of the guitar, open up and think "What if?", then there's so much.

'A lot of it is the way you tie chord voicings or soloing together. If you're really playing through the changes you're freeing up your playing to kind of "italic" the song as you go through it, rather than just "Here's the solo, I'll play this boxed in." And there's so much you can do with rhythm... you don't even have to play lead, just melodic stuff with the rhythm part.'

Eric's often been seen toting some rather desirable equipment. He regularly tours with a '57 Strat, vintage Fender and Marshall amps, and a pedalboard populated with bruised and battered examples of classic effects. But not even these prized possessions have escaped the renaissance that is moving through Johnson's life.

'I've sold a lot of guitars and amps and stuff. I'm trying to zero in on inspirational guitars, ones that really work for me. For a while I was enjoying some guitars that didn't quite work for me musically. Because they were cool I wanted to play them, but when I did, I was struggling to do my style on them. After a while it was, like, "Why am I doing this?" I think if you're really trying to get on with music then you want to be careful not to get too much into things that are cool, or rare, or whatever. It doesn't mean it's a vehicle to make you play at your highest benchmark.'

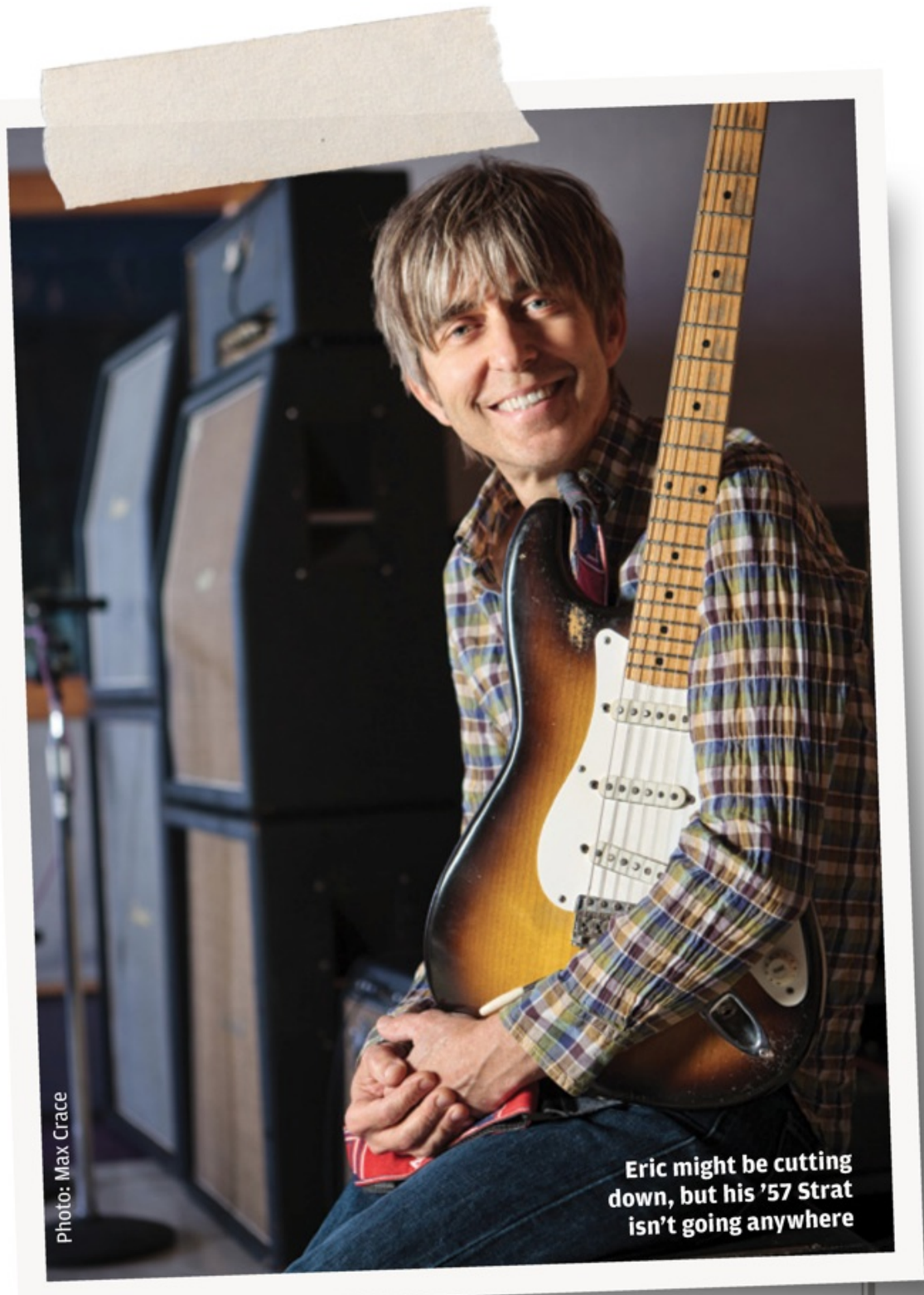
Photo: Max Crace

Eric might be cutting down, but his '57 Strat isn't going anywhere

'I'm starting to hear some things, voicings and chords, trying to get a little freer'

A few years ago Eric teamed up with Fender to release his own signature Strat, and it's gone on to be seen by many as a particularly fine examples of Leo's masterpiece. So how did he try to improve an icon?

'Well, I just tried to return to some of the stuff they had in the '50s,' Johnson explains. 'For instance the tremolo block had changed a bit, so we tried to put that back. We wanted to select the right kind of wood – quarter-sawn for the maple neck. We tried to deal with some tuning issues as far as the headstock angle went... and then we made the fretboard a little flatter, added bigger frets, put the tone control on the bridge pickup and made the bridge pickup a little hotter. A lot of these things were just from the '50s. The things we changed were pretty much things that essentially makes a Strat play and sound better. '

Now Eric is joining forces with Dunlop to do the same with another legendary figure in the musical pantheon... the Fuzz Face.

'I wanted to come up with something because all those old fuzzes are becoming impossible to find,' he points out. 'There was a certain thing about a good old Fuzz Face that worked really well for me, and I went about trying to recreate that as closely as possible. I think the original Fuzz Face was a happy accident. They didn't use particularly good wire, they were cheap pots, everything was low-tech, but because it was low-tech and not really stout it ended up translating the fuzz better. If you go back and build the Fuzz Face better then it doesn't sound as good. Part of the new pedal was to build it with low-tech parts.'

In many ways the pedal is representative of Johnson's current outlook – a return to basics with the mantra of doing the right things right. As Eric prepares for his European tour and new recording sessions, he's philosophical about where he is on his musical path.

'With so many players and so much music there needs to be a unique flavour to what you do,' he offers. 'People want to hear your joy in that. When something turns you on, you can turn other people on. I think people just want to hear your spirit.'

Licking BATTERIES

Over the years there's been a few wild stories about the particular nature of Eric Johnson. If you were to believe them all then he'd be some reclusive genius that can distinguish the tonal properties of metal, magnets and air density in any given venue. But there was one tale in particular that had always caught our imagination – and that was whether he licked batteries to taste the difference they'd make to his sound...

'That's just made up,' he laughs. 'There is a difference in the way batteries are constructed, so they slightly affect the performance of a fuzz. I found a battery I liked many, many years ago and made a five-minute decision and stuck with them, never thinking about it again. But there's a whole thing built around it that I sit around trying batteries for hours upon end.'

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Photo: Ian Shipley

Double Trouble

More than just the first British user of a twin-necked Gibson, Frank White is an unsung guitar hero who, rather than be a Clapton in a wider world, limited himself to remaining adored locally. Interview by **Alan Clayson**

Read the history of British pop in the '60s and you'll notice much emphasis on bands from the big regional centres like Liverpool, Manchester or Newcastle and the seemingly unstoppable drift of those bands towards the capital in search of fame and fortune. In reality, though, many bands emerged in other areas and acquired a tremendous grassroots following yet deliberately never made the jump to the bright lights – and some would recount bitterly how, encouraged by a taste of chart success, this singer or that group had betrayed them by defecting to London and beyond.

It's notable how many artists in Yorkshire's West Riding chose to stay in the area after their individual storms broke. One of them is Frank White, a player still active and with a new album in the works, yet a man whose career has been punctuated by calculated decisions to look to home before various periods gliding on the winds of pop were up. Maybe Frank has always heeded John Lennon's premise: 'Don't bother trying to make it, because when you do there's nothing to make.'

'I didn't have a clue. I thought you tuned a guitar just by tightening the strings'

When Frank was growing up in post-war Sheffield, so parochial was provincial pop anyway that you had to head south to 'make it' because talent scouts from the kingdom's four major record companies (centred in London) rarely found time to sound out talent beyond the capital. However, if the Steel City spawned no hit parade contenders in the 1950s, home-reared performers were guaranteed a substantial workload within easy reach. Moreover, local heroes were (and still are) granted support spots to famous visitors to the City Hall – where Frank, then a clerk in the city council's housing department, saw Muddy Waters during his first UK tour – and the Empire where Lonnie Donegan and his Skiffle Group headed the bill in 1957.

As with punk in later years, anyone who'd mastered basic techniques could have a go at skiffle, and that's what bespectacled City Grammar schoolboy Frank did after his piano-playing grandmother bought him his first guitar. 'I didn't have a clue about where to begin,' he chuckles, 'I thought you tuned a guitar by just tightening the strings. Then – and this is true – I was walking in a field that had sprung up from a bomb site near where we lived and I found on the floor a piece of paper with instructions on how to tune a guitar. It was just lying there! Three months later, I was in the Zodiacs – two guitars, bass, drums. Not that I was brilliant or anything, but I just found a way to get the things in my head out through a guitar.'

When skiffle lost its flavour on the bedpost overnight, the more 'sophisticated' of its practitioners that hadn't fallen by the wayside switched to trad jazz. However, Frank slid towards classic rock'n'roll. Entirely self-taught and yet able to read and write music, he listened hard to Franny Beecher, Scotty Moore and Cliff Gallup, the guitarists for Bill Haley, Elvis and Gene Vincent, and purchased a Futurama and then a Fender Stratocaster from Wilson Peck, the city's only musical equipment shop. But his most important find was yet to come.

'One afternoon in 1962 I saw a twin-necked solid mahogany Gibson in a catalogue,' he recalls. 'It was a heart-stopping moment, and I just had to have it – though it cost the same as a terraced house in Sheffield!'

Thus Frank became the first in the country to own a gleaming white Gibson doubleneck. Manufactured only on demand at the Gibson workshop in Kalamazoo, Michigan, it took two years to reach Frank, who, having emerged as a sensational lead guitarist, had pledged himself to former schoolboy swimming champ Jimmy Crawford and his Ravens.

The Ravens were fully pro, and their work spectrum extended into Wales and as far south as Hampshire. Often they'd compare notes with others who'd also broken loose of local orbits, like Kent's Sounds Incorporated, Liverpool's Beatles, the Barron-Knights from Leighton Buzzard and Middlesex's Cliff Bennett and the Rebel

Gear

Guitars
Electric: white Squier Stratocaster. Acoustic: Hondo 12-string

Amp
Fender Pro Reverb

Effects
Various including Turbo Overdrive

Frank with Gibson – an astonishing guitar to behold in the 1960s

Photo: Heron Publications

A bespectacled Frank in the mid-'60s with the Mk11 version of the Cruisers

Photo: Ian Shipley

Rousers. Moreover, late in 1960, Crawford landed a record deal – and so did the Ravens, who as well as providing accompaniment both on the boards and in the studio for Jimmy, issued a one-shot instrumental single, *The Ghoul Friend*, in their own right.

Next, after a false start with *Unkind*, Crawford tiptoed into the chart with *Love Or Money* before a cover of The Paris Sisters' *I Love How You Love Me* breached the Top 20 around Christmas 1961 in the wake of a schedule of radio spots and other promotional necessities and a round-Britain trek with the Springfields and Danny Williams (and 18-year old Frank as its musical director). Sadly for Jimmy, the *I Shoulda Listened To Mama* follow-up didn't leave the runway – and, as well as that, as far as the planet at large was concerned, being that for Jimmy Crawford. His rueful Ravens, meanwhile, had discovered that, if backing outfits were ever allowed to appear on television, it was usually to skulk in grey mediocrity beyond the main spotlight – until the Merseybeat craze heralded an emphasis on combos without non-instrumentalists like Crawford fronting them.

> *'I had to have the twin-neck Gibson, though it cost the same as a terraced house'*

After gutting Liverpool of every group with even the faintest tang of star quality and less, the horde of contract-waving record companies next alighted on other northern city 'sounds.' In Sheffield, Decca snared Dave Berry and the Cruisers, who'd risen from the ashes of the Chuck Fowler R&B Band. In their uniform string ties and Italian suits the Cruisers had started to look and sound dangerously like a pop group to dismayed R&B enthusiasts. Girls in fishnet, suede and leather clustered nearest the stage, their evening made if they locked eyes with charismatic former apprentice welder Dave, who was developing a stage act that had the surreal deliberation of a dream's slow motion. Berry's subsequent hits included *The Crying Game* – remarkable for session guitarist Big Jim Sullivan's use of a volume/tone pedal to create a suitably tearful ambiance – *Little Things* and, the vehicle through which Dave surfaced as the Presley of the Netherlands, 1965's *This Strange Effect*. By this time the original Cruisers, bar rhythm guitarist Alan Taylor, had been supplanted by Frank White, drummer John Riley (who works with Frank today in Sheffield rock'n'roll revivalists the Hillbilly Cats) and, on bass, Pete Cliffe. It was a great group of musicians, though any subtleties were ➔

And another thing...

Frank's son Joel, a keyboard player, was a member of Pulp – as was his nephew Richard Hawley. Frank participated in Hawley's solo show at London's Royal Albert Hall in 2008, bringing back memories of the Stones tour with Dave Berry in 1965, when Mick Jagger and Keith Richards visited the Cruisers' dressing room to compliment Frank on his playing.

I hear you knocking

A lifelong search for spiritual comprehension led Frank – in common with Hank Marvin and Slade guitarist Dave Hill – to become a Jehovah's Witness 30 years ago, spreading the word by knocking on residential doors in and around Sheffield. 'I'll be knocking and rocking until the day I die,' he smiles, 'There has been no contradiction whatsoever between rock'n'roll and God.

'Also, being a Witness has not made me any less ambitious or hungry for success – but it means I have my priorities right. I have never sought fame for its own sake. To me, music is the closest thing to knowing God. You can hear a song you haven't heard for decades and it can transport you back to the person you were when you first heard it. It is a deeply spiritual thing to be able to move people like that. I play because I have to. I couldn't live without playing. To me it's like eating and drinking. I would fall apart without it.'

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Listen up

FRANK WHITE
Nice To Be On Your Show
(1973)
A cover photograph of Frank's feet up on a console reflects some laidback content that includes an opus entitled *Punk*

FRANK WHITE
One More Lonely Night
(1988)
On this production by ex-Grease Bandsman (and Wham!'s musical director) Tommy Eyre, Frank plays a fender Stratocaster rather than the fabulous Gibson doubleneck

FRANK WHITE
The Cat
2010
Highlights include a self-penned title track and heartfelt overhauls of Ketty Lester's *Love Letters* and Sam Cooke's *You Send Me*

to be almost smothered by shrieking pandemonium on a UK tour with the Rolling Stones and the Hollies.

So effectively did they back up Dave – described variously as 'Mr. Slocomotion', 'The Human Sloth' and 'England's own Herman Munster' – that Decca permitted the Cruisers a single of their own. However, after their overhaul of Bob Dylan's *It Ain't Me Babe* backed with Jimmy Reed's *Baby What You Want Me To Do* was consigned to the deletion rack by 1966, Alan Taylor would be counting in another batch of new recruits for Berry. Frank White now led his own trio and began a season in The Shades, one of many clubs in a now thriving city music scene.

Resembling a cross between Link Wray and Canned Heat's myopic Al 'Blind Owl' Wilson, White was emitting blistering solos that would silence drinkers like a mass bell in Madrid, and proving no slouch as a singer too (in 1992 he'd receive a BBC award as Blues Vocalist Of The Year). Later, he expanded the unit – as Frank White's Katters – with an up-and-coming Joe Cocker joining guest performers.

Cocker and his Grease Band had touched the ceiling of local impact by 1968 when *With A Little Help From My Friends* reached the top in Britain, and the band enjoyed triumphant overseas tours – and slew the half-million drenched Americans who'd braved Woodstock, the yardstick by which future Cocker performances would always be measured.

Frank's original Gibson EDS-1275 doubleneck, now owned by fellow Sheffield guitarist Phil Brodie

> *'I didn't want to be an absent father, so I put my career on the back burner'*

The darker of the twin climaxes of hippy culture took place later that year at Altamont, starring the Rolling Stones with their new guitarist, Mick Taylor. Before his recruitment, however, there'd been purported talk – but only talk – of Frank White replacing the departed Brian Jones. 'I don't really want to speculate on what's been said,' says Frank. 'My wife Jean and I wanted a boy and a girl, and that's what we had. I didn't want to be an absent father. A defining moment was when I came home late one night after three weeks and four days on the road, and my infant son came into the bedroom the next morning and didn't recognise me. So that meant putting my career on the back burner. I don't regret it for a moment because it was the right thing to do.'

Instead, Frank sprouted some impressive whiskers, invested in contact lenses and was content to wow packed houses during a weekly residency that lasted nearly two decades at Sheffield's 160-capacity Pheasant, with gravelly vocals and a fretboard style that displayed both eclecticism and unpredictability, plus a subtlety untried by such as Eric Clapton. In 1973 Frank released *Nice To Be On Your Show*, a 'live in the studio' album that made him the only Englishman to record for Fantasy, a US label whose flagship act was Creedence Clearwater Revival (contractual obligations to Fantasy put paid to a similar opportunity offered later by Tamla Motown). 'On some sort of impulse I'd moved briefly to London after joining a band led by Alan Bown with Jim Rodford, later of Argent, and then Tony Dangerfield on bass. It was at a college gig with Alan down there that I came to the attention of Fantasy.' *Nice To Be On Your Show* was the last recording to feature the twin-necked Gibson – which was soon to be sold, and is now owned by Phil Brodie, once of local prog-rock ensemble Bitter Suite.

It was to be another 15 years – that took Frank as far afield as a blues festival on the frontier of Scandinavia and Russia, and studio dates in Nashville – before another album, *One More Lonely Night*, appeared. Next was 1994's *Dog It* – which did brisk business on the merchandising stand on any Friday evening down the Pheasant – to where he returned in 2010 after an 11-year absence for a triumphant launch (filmed for a forthcoming DVD) of *The Cat*, a project finished despite the – now abated – clinical depression that has plagued Frank for years. 'It had to be Sheffield and the Pheasant,' he explains. 'Nowhere else would feel right. I could have had a much bigger venue in London, but this is where my heart is.'

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Nashville *Rocker*

He found fame as a country singer, but Vince Gill is a truly talented guitar player – and, as he explains to **Julian Piper**, he's always been a rocker at heart

Gear

Guitars
1953 Fender Telecaster, Fender Stratocaster fitted with EMG pickups, Gibson 1950s J-200 and J-45, Gibson 335

Amps
Fender tweed Deluxe, Fender blackface Deluxe, 1959 Fender Bassman, Rivera amps. 'I'll try any amp,' Vince says

When Vince Gill bounded onstage at Eric Clapton's 2007 Crossroads Show, to many amongst the vast crowd of EC devotees this Telecaster-toting country singer was a complete unknown. But after 10 minutes and a salvo of blistering chicken-picking licks, the man who's received more Grammy Awards than any male country artist in history had proved he could also reach a rock audience.

The significance was not lost on Vince Gill. His latest album, *Guitar Slinger*, is jammed with extended solos and guitar tones that owe far more to his early British guitar heroes than Buck Owens. Speaking from his home in Nashville, the quietly-spoken country star begins by explaining just how important appearing at the Crossroads Festival had been.

'Being invited to play was hugely inspiring – many people would have conceived me as just being a country singer, but Eric knew about the musician in me,' he points out. 'He said "I'm only inviting guitar players that I like," and that meant the world to me, giving me encouragement as a musician at a time when I was struggling pretty hard with the popularity of my music.

'I wasn't getting radio plays or as much work – the typical way that a musical career evolves... up and down, up and down. But from that point on I said I'm going to play just what I want to play, as tenderly as I want, as bluesy as I want, as loud as I want, or just hit some country licks. Playing that show redefined who I knew I always was as a guitarist.'

Vince described the recent passing of banjo wizard Earl Scruggs as like 'losing my musical father', so it comes as no surprise to learn that he was born into a family with a father who wanted to be nothing more than able to play the Scruggs way.

'I played the guitar first but I'd heard the banjo from the day that I was born,' he explains. 'But when I first heard Earl Scruggs, it was like somebody had taken a hammer and hit me in the head, saying "Listen to this – it's great." Some things speak to you more than others, and Earl's sound did that... I don't know why.

'My father played the banjo in a folky rhythmic kind of way, and as a little boy I remember watching my poor father try to learn what Earl did – that three-fingered roll and the driving sound – but he could never get it.'

So did learning to play the banjo help with Vince's guitar style? 'No – I'm not very good on banjo, just average!' he admits. 'I play it a lot, though, because I just enjoy the sound. In a lot of the early bands I was in, I played it because I was just what was left over. Someone would say 'We need a dobro player or we need a banjo player...' so I picked my way and learnt enough to get by.'

One of Vince's early bluegrass bands even once supported rock behemoths Kiss. 'Upon reflection it probably wasn't a good idea, but it was a hysterical experience to have so many people hate you,' Vince laughs. 'I don't play banjo much these days but when Earl passed I just went and sat in a room with one and played for a little while. It was just great to have a banjo in my hands again.'

Vince Gill loves his Fender electrics and Gibson acoustics. This is a late '30s Gibson Advanced Jumbo

Surprisingly Vince's road to becoming a country superstar began not by copping Chet Atkins licks – a man whose playing he cites as a major influence – but by the Les Paul-driven sounds of Jimmy Page and Jeff Beck.

'I was probably as equally influenced by English guitar players as anyone from over here – it's interesting how that cycle worked,' he muses. 'But when I came to realise that their influences were from the States, you begin to learn about history and how much we've swapped across the pond.'

He's unstinting in his praise for the unassuming guitar wizard that followed him onstage at the 2007 Crossroads Festival. 'Albert Lee was one of the most influential guitar players to me. His work with Emmylou Harris was brilliant – no one plays like him,' he enthuses. 'James Burton is probably the kingpin of that Telecaster chicken-picking thing, but Albert took it to a whole different place – and there's a kind of bounce in his playing that I've never heard in any other guitarist. We wound up being friends back in 1976 or '77, and played together with that camp of characters that included Rodney Crowell and Emmylou, the whole bunch that I started running around with as a 19-year old kid. That's when I began leaning into the acoustic side of things, learned about all the folk songs from Ireland and Scotland, which is where country music really came from.'

'Supporting Kiss wasn't a good idea. It was hysterical to have people hating you'

Listen up

VINCE GILL
These Days
2006
With an all-star supporting cast that includes Sheryl Crow and Bonnie Raitt, this four-album tour de force showcases Gill's guitar virtuosity on everything from honkytonk primitivism to Chuck Berry-like rockers and lush ballads

VINCE GILL
Guitar Slinger
2012
A return to Gill's earliest rock influences with a hefty dose of country stirred into the mix, allowing Vince to stretch out with some inspired Claptonesque solos, proving there's more to the man than just chicken-pickin'

So does *Guitar Slinger* mark a whole new change of direction? 'Not really – in honesty it's the way I've always been, but nobody noticed!' Vince sighs. 'I always knew that the musician side of me would take second place to my singing, but I've always played with the diversity that I play now, and I feel more compelled to do it. I'm okay to just go and play and not worry about what box it fits in.'

> *'I'm now okay to just go and play guitar and not worry about what box it fits in'*

At times the guitar tone Vince achieves on *Guitar Slinger* is very Claptonesque, but he insists that there was no conscious attempt to emulate Eric's sound. 'It's a great compliment that you should make any kind of comparison, but the first time I played with Eric I wasn't worried about the playing – it was the tone,' he says. 'Eric had recorded one of my songs, and he completely annihilated his solo – just off the charts. I was playing a few fills here and there where it was necessary, but what I played just sounded weedy in comparison. Then Eric asked the engineer whether my guitar had any reverb on it. When he said "No," Eric laughed and said "Shit! Make mine sound that good!" So it was a great lesson, and it taught me that we're all a little bit insecure.'

In 1989, after a chance meeting in New York with Mark Knopfler, Vince was asked to join Dire Straits. 'I was a great fan of Mark and he inspired me to play the Strat the way he does, with the meat of my fingers to get a fatter, sweeter tone. At the time I was really broke and struggling. I had changed record companies, I'd been in Nashville and I'd made two or three albums, but not very much was happening.

'It was really tough trying to figure out whether I was going to carve myself out a spot – and the indications were that I might not! It was a tempting offer, and I'd just finished an album for MCA with no reason to believe it would do any better than the others. But I felt that if I had taken the job, it would have been admitting failure.

'In hindsight I was very lucky because the record exploded and changed my career forever. I also wound up playing on Mark's next record, and I was really flattered that someone from a totally different genre understood me; it was a kind of validation, something which we all need now and then. It felt great.'

And another thing...

Guitar Slinger **was recorded in Vince's new home studio, the walls of which are lined with vintage Fender tweed cloth and the ceiling covered with grill cloth. Vince reckons recording there is just like being inside a huge amplifier.**

Vince's Tele LUCKY ESCAPE

Vince's number one guitar is a 1953 Fender Telecaster that he bought for just $450.'The old guy I bought it from, until the day he died, every time I saw him, he'd say "You sure got to me on that Telecaster...!"'

On the night of the Nashville floods when returning from a gig in appalling weather, Vince suggested his road crew unload in the morning. It was a fortuitous move: a few hours later his storage facility was flooded, and he lost 60 guitars. 'I would have been devastated had I lost the Telecaster. It's all original, the holy grail.'

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Northern *Delights*

In these uncertain times one success story belongs to Northern Guitar Shows, whose combination of great gear, great music and friendly faces seems have hit the right spot. *G&B* meets up with Peter and Gail Hoarty to find out where it all went right

Gordon Giltrap is just one of many top-level guitarists who have played at the Northern Guitar Shows

Over the past few years a number of guitar shows have come and gone, and both the industry and the guitar-playing community have wondered if the UK has enough of an audience and a market sufficiently interested in this kind of event, or whether the right formula still needs to be found. However, throughout this time of industrial and economic upheaval, the Northern Guitar Shows run by Peter and Gail Hoarty have quietly gone from strength to strength.

Having started out in 1998 with a single show in Manchester, the Hoartys now run five events in venues across Lancashire, Yorkshire and the North East – not only cementing their fanbase across all the guitar players, distributors, makers and retailers who attend, but actually increasing their reach and popularity with each passing year.

It's obviously a successful approach, and it's surprising to learn that the couple started up their first-ever guitar show after having only ever attended just one themselves.

'To be honest, the Music Ground show they ran in Leeds in 1997 was the first one I'd ever really heard about, certainly in terms of anywhere close to where we lived, despite the fact that I'd been playing music for a long time and it was my passion,' explains Peter. 'At that time I was working in finance, but in my spare time I was a vintage guitar collector, and I was also into renovating valve amps. Back then you could pick up a Vox AC30 for £60, and once you'd done it up you could sell it on for £300!

'I had a room full of every kind of amp you could you think of, so when we heard about this show and what it was all about and that you could hire a

Chickenbone John plays one of his own Cigar Box creations

Guitars of all sizes are available to try and buy at the shows...

There are plenty of bargains to be had for show attendees

A couple of players decide to 'do the show right here'

stand, we did just that – put a lot of amps in a van and set off for Leeds, not knowing what to expect. We had a sensational time, did some deals, and met some great people.'

When Peter and Gail learned that Music Ground weren't planning to do any more shows, they decided to set up their own event the following year at Manchester's Palace Hotel.

'It had a great ballroom in the basement that we hired, and we had about 35 exhibitors hiring stands,' says Peter. 'On that Sunday morning we were so nervous... we were down in this basement where you couldn't see the outside world, and that meant we couldn't see if anyone had turned up! Eventually word got down to us that there was a healthy-looking queue, and we ended up having around 550 people attend the first show, which came as quite a relief!'

Many aspects of the show have changed since that first one, including the nature of the stands. In the beginning the emphasis was firmly on vintage and secondhand equipment, but if you attend a 2012 Northern Guitar Show you'll find over 100 exhibitors, including retailers such as PMT and Dawsons Music, distributors such as John Hornby Skewes, and modern makers like Eggle Guitars.

'We realised that not everyone was going to be into vintage guitars and amps,' points out Peter. 'We understood that if people knew that they could pick up bargains at the show and see new products as well, that would really motivate them to come along. So it was important to get retailers, distributors and people like that involved as soon as possible. You also have to remember that back in the late '90s the market was really buoyant and that online retailing hadn't kicked in yet, so it was harder to persuade these busy people to give up their whole Sunday to run a stand at the show.'

'We were so nervous at the first show but we had 550 turn up, which was a relief'

Hasn't the tougher environment for guitar retailers meant they are even less likely to attend, as they don't want to undercut the business and profit margins they have? The question is met by a vigorous shake of the head by Peter.

'It's the opposite. People who take stands here get the opportunity to relate to potential customers. If they treat the people who attend the show right, they'll get repeat business out of it. We only do five shows a year, while guitar shops are open at least five days a week. The feedback we get from retailers is that in the weeks following a show they can get a number of people through their door who maybe didn't have the money on them at the show to buy the gear they wanted, or hadn't made their mind up about a guitar on the day. Also, some of the less-established retailers get customers who only found out the shop existed when they attended a show. If it didn't work for them, there's nothing Gail or myself could say that would make them attend.'

When asked about what other lessons they learned during the early years of running shows, Peter's response is to 'make it a good day out', citing organising live music and demo performances as a big reason why people stay for the whole day rather than stay for a couple of hours, buy what they need and then leave. ➔

So many guitars -and actually quite a lot of time to browse

Enough PRS action to harm a normal human being

Welcome to the Cigarbox gallery

'It's great to see people enjoying themselves. It's like hosting a really good party'

'We realised early on that the atmosphere and social side of things were just as much a key as getting the right people to take stands,' he emphasises. 'We picked venues like Haydock Park and Aintree because they were the right size and had the right facilities; all our venues have free parking. We keep the ticket prices down and let under 12's in free so that people can bring their kids.

'We did a couple of shows in the Midlands a few years back that didn't quite work, and you realise how important atmosphere is. Some of our venues are bigger than others, but they always fit the amount of people we're likely to get, and they're welcoming places that encourage people to be friendly. I know a lot of people come to the shows to meet up with old friends, regardless of whether they're looking to buy something or not - and we wholeheartedly encourage that. You can take out of the day what you want.'

Despite the stresses and strains of the organiser's job, Peter says that he enjoys show days just as much as anyone coming in on their day off. 'Remember, we get to meet old friends as well. It's great to see people enjoying themselves. It's like hosting a really good party.'

Regardless of the continuing success of the Northern Guitar Shows, there's one thing you're unlikely to see Peter indulging in during an event - getting up and doing a few numbers. 'I'm in an Eagles tribute band, and one time I had to get us to play when the original band dropped out at the last minute. That wasn't a particularly fun day,' he recalls with a rueful grin. 'People do ask why I don't take advantage of my running these shows by booking my own band, but it's just too much to worry about all in the one day. I'm happy keeping the two things separate!'

For all the latest news on forthcoming Northern Guitar Shows, call 01925 813185 or visit www.guitarshows.co.uk

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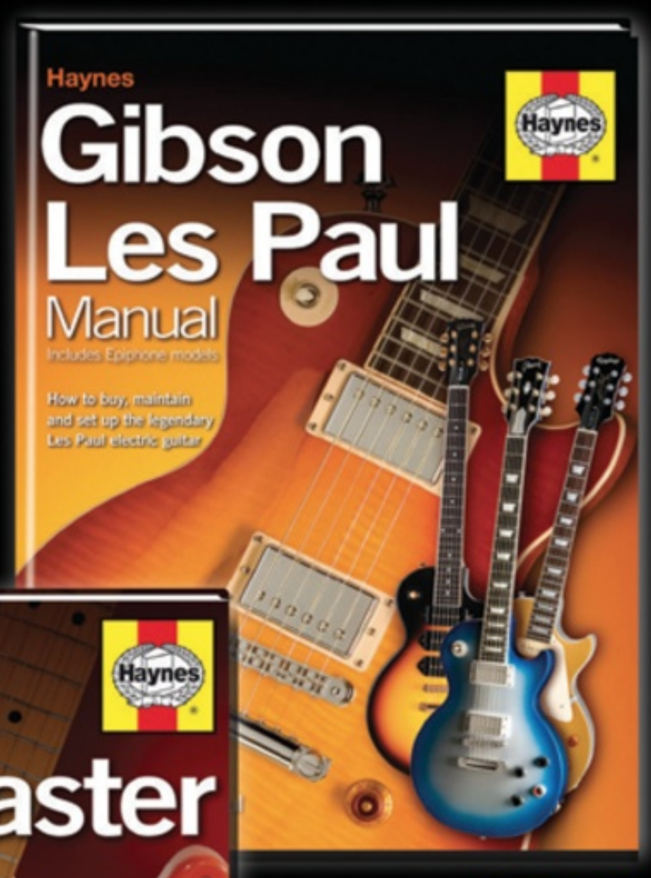

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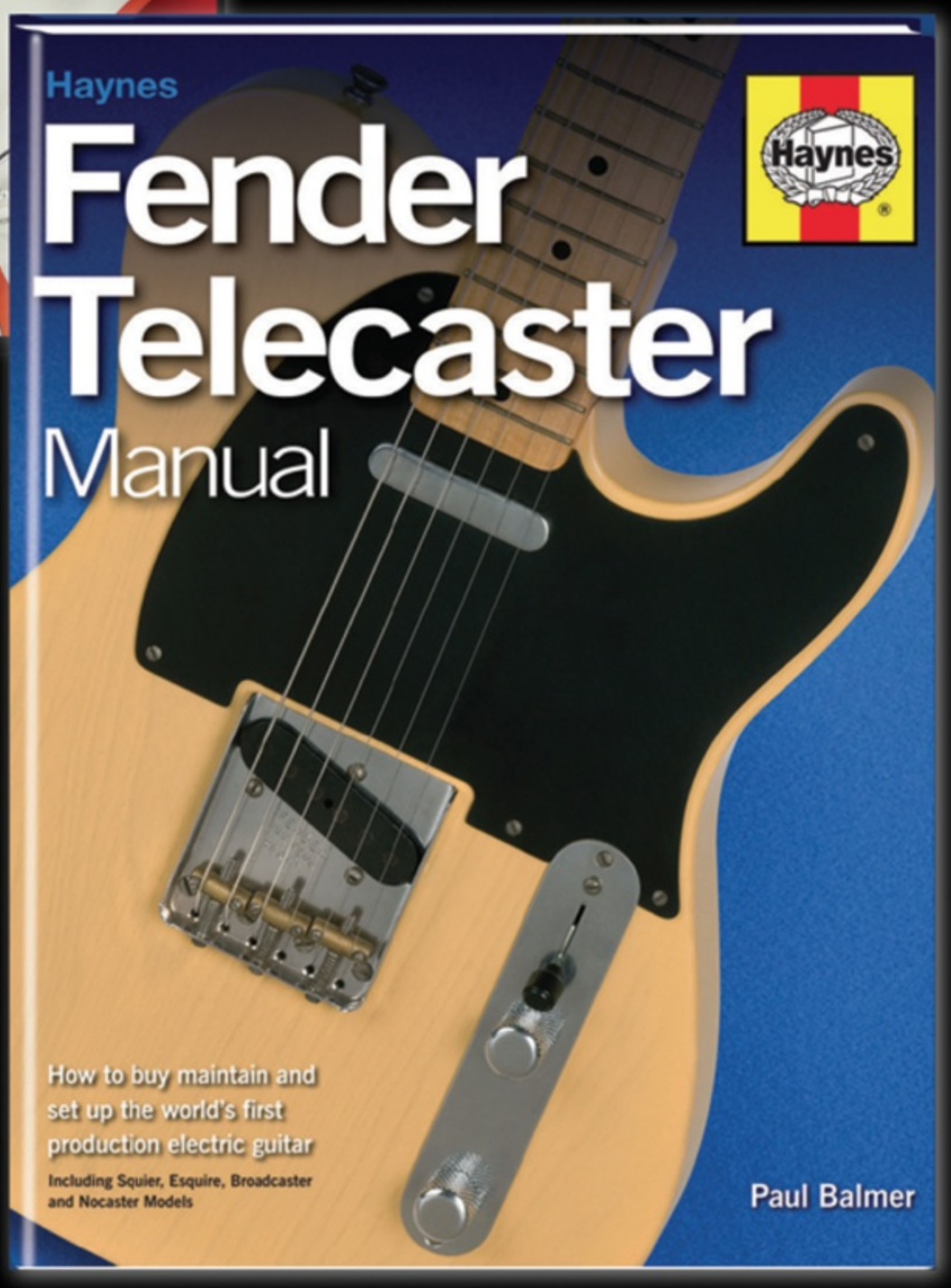

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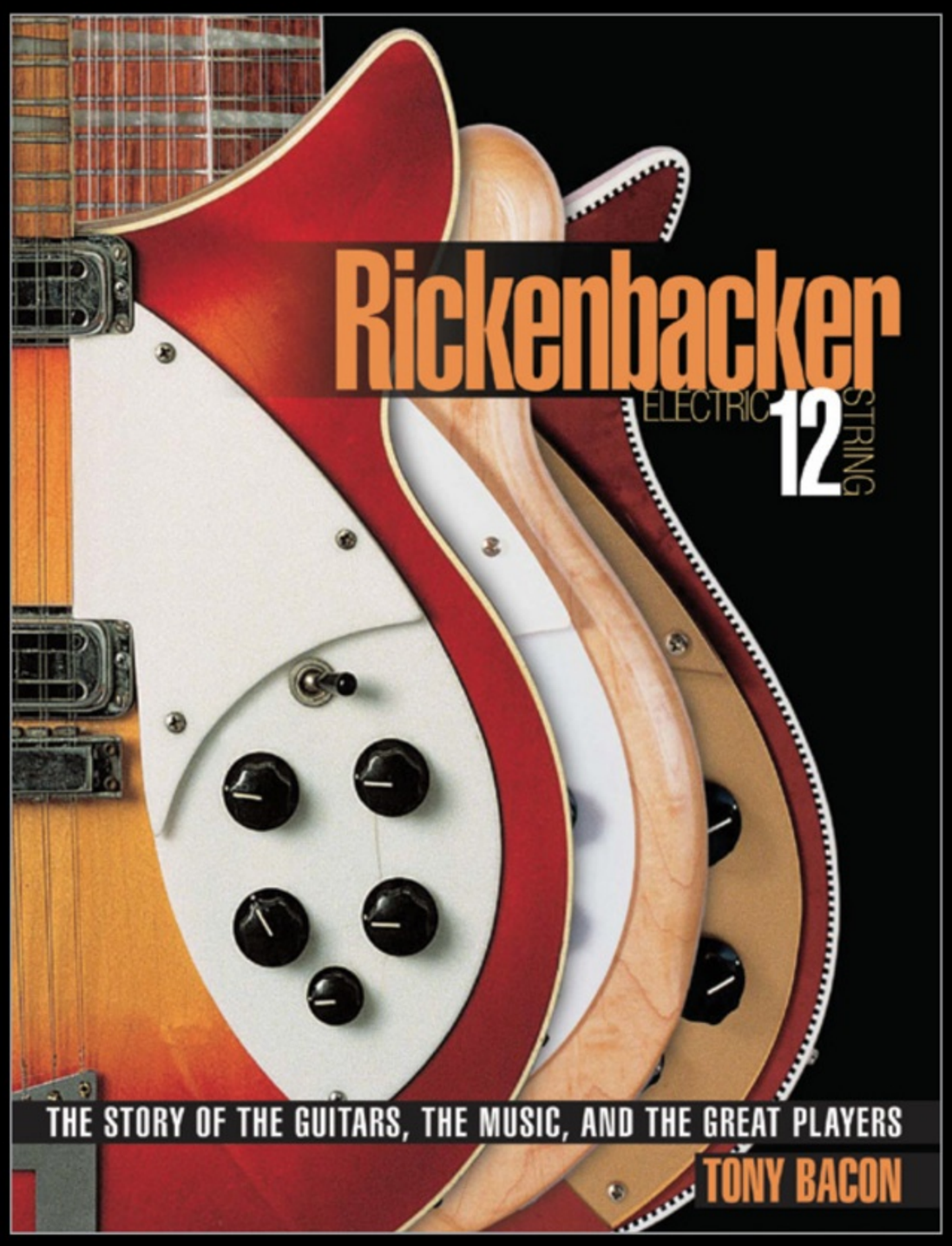

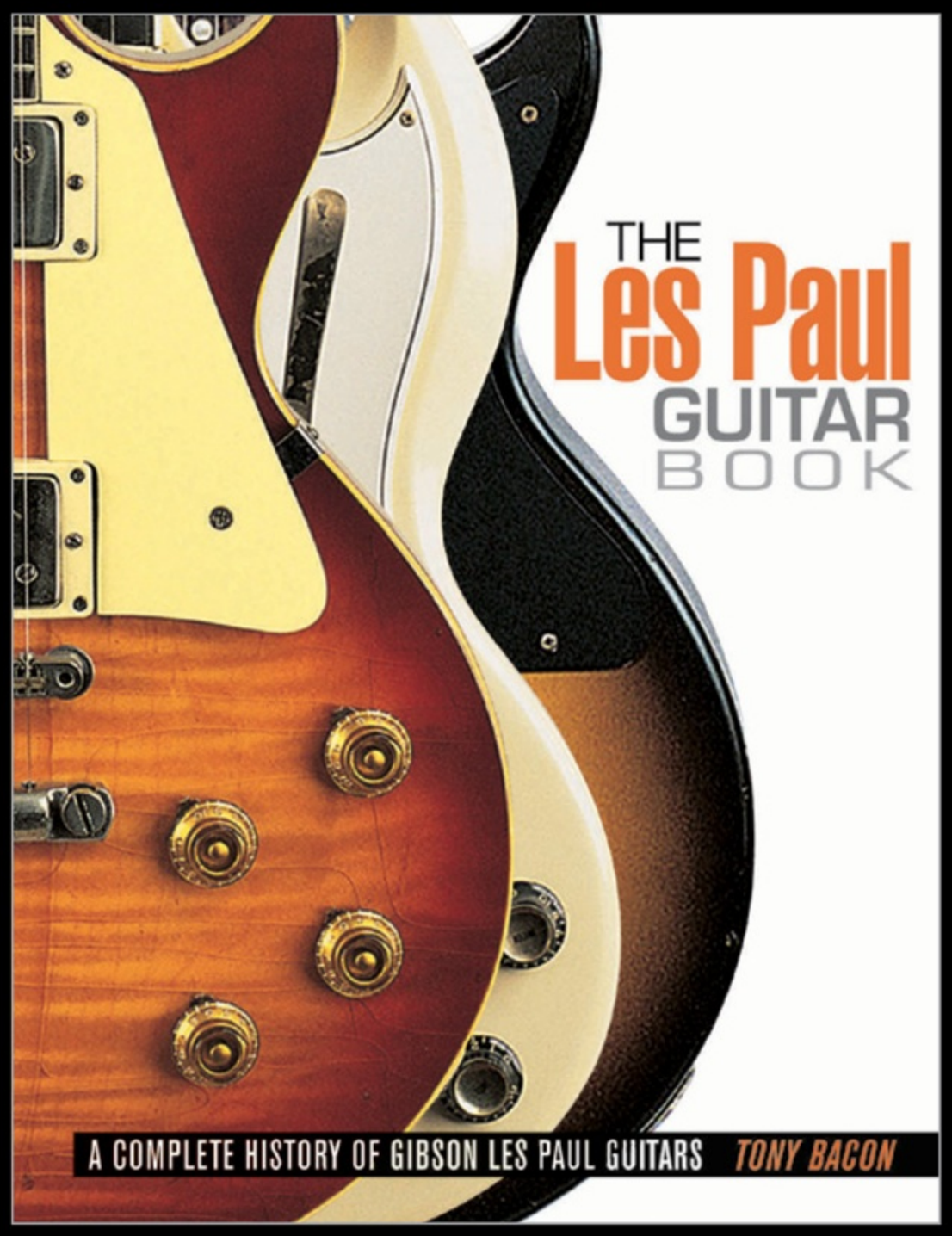

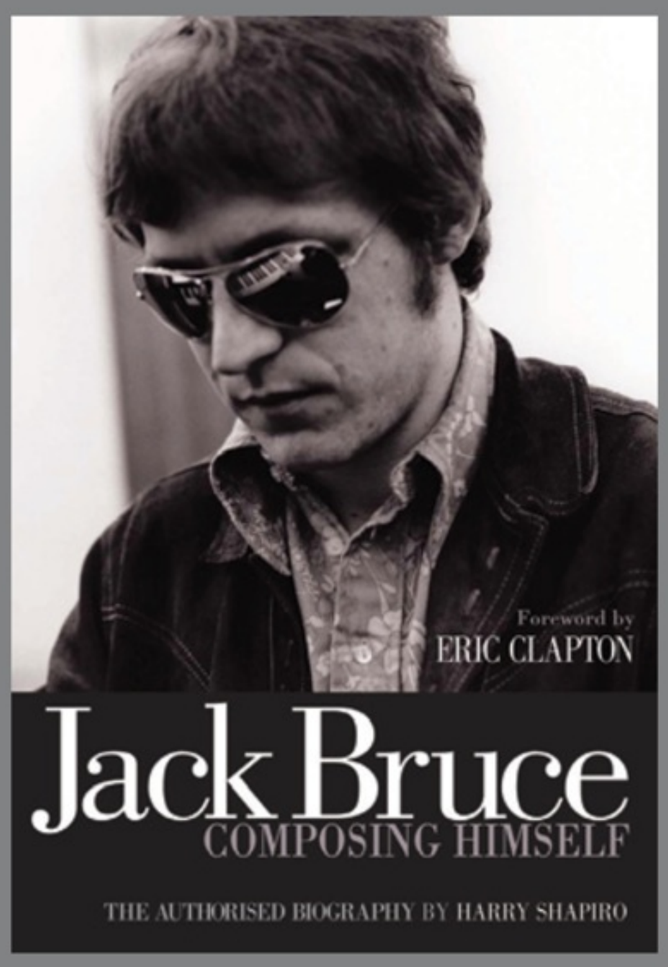

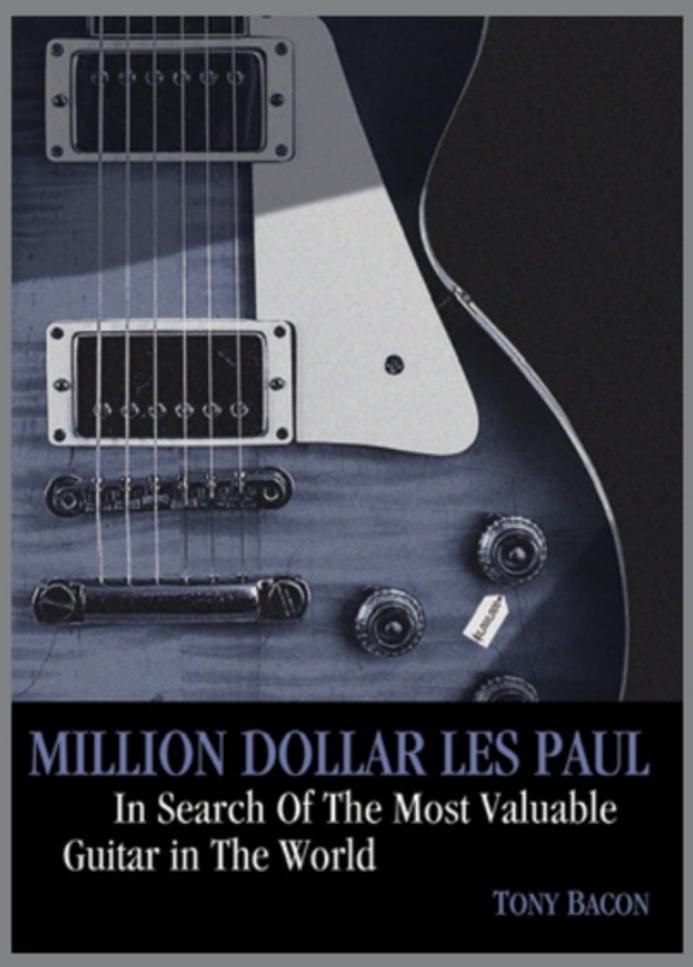

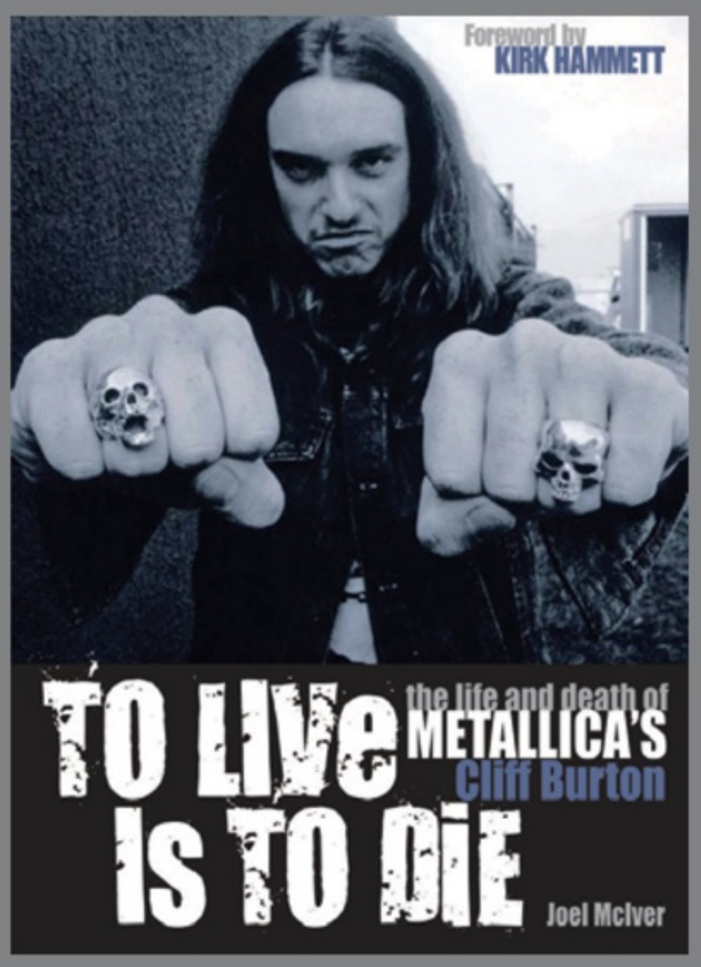

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FENDER
Telecaster Custom FSR

Telecaster solidity with the warmth and raunch of soapbars sounds like a winning combination, but is this Mexican FSR really much better than the far cheaper Squier? Review by **Huw Price**

FACTFILE
Fender Telecaster Custom FSR

DESCRIPTION
Solidbody electric guitar. Made in Mexico
PRICE **£946.80**

BUILD **Ash body with maple neck, 21-fret rosewood fingerboard, hardtail bridge, F-branded tuners**
ELECTRICS **Two 'soapbar' P90-style pickups, three-way pickup switch, individual volume and tone controls**
LEFT HANDER **No**
FINISH **Black and sunset orange transparent**

SCALE LENGTH **648mm/25.5"**
WIDTH OF NECK
Nut 42mm
12th fret 52mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 19mm
12th fret 20mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 35.5mm
Bridge 53.5mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 2mm
12th fret bass 2.5mm
WEIGHT **3.75kg/8.25lbs**

CONTACT **Fender Europe**
01342 331700
www.fendereurope.com

Surely there can't be any other iconic guitar model that has seen more pickup combinations than the Telecaster. Even Fender's 'official' products have included Teles with not just the hallowed format but also with Wide Range humbuckers, PAFs, mini humbuckers, Filtertrons, DeArmonds and Strat-type single coils. All kinds of wacky combinations have been tried, too... often matched with the stock units. So the fact that the Custom FSR is a Tele with two P90 soapbar-style single coils isn't particularly remarkable.

Setting aside the incongruous cream pickup covers, the FSR is a harmonious blend of classic Fender features. With its three-bolt neck plate, headstock-end bullet trussrod, F-branded tuners and logo the FSR conveys a strong '70s feel that tallies nicely with the origins of this particular design. Having said that, the flawless black finish with the contrasting off-white binding combines with the chrome hardware and glossy black pickguard to achieve a clean and contemporary look. We think a pair of black or chrome pickup covers might make this guitar look even better.

The slab rosewood board on this example is tightly grained and nicely figured. Pearly dots may have tallied with the '70s theme but we liked the off white 'clay' dots anyway. Although none of the grain is visible, we're told that the body is made from ash. This model is also available in transparent orange.

Bullet truss rod, two string trees – and all FSR's come with a rosewood fingerboard only

The much-maligned Fender three-bolt neck joint: nothing wrong when it's done properly

The FSR is a harmonious blend of classic Fender features with the three-bolt neck and bullet trussrod conveying a '70s feel

Sounds

The slim C-shaped neck makes this guitar comfortable to play, although not every player will appreciate Fender's traditional 7.25" fingerboard radius. This example is well set up with a medium low action, but bent strings do tend to choke out before they've reached a whole tone – something only a flatter radius would solve.

Still, the acoustic tone is mellow, woody and fairly resonant. The twang and snap that you may associate ➔

Like this? Try these...

Fender
JA-90 Jim Adkins
From Fender's Artist Series, this semi-hollow ash bodied Tele has a set mahogany neck with a modern C profile, rosewood fretboard, 22 medium jumbo frets, one Seymour Duncan Vintage P90 and one Custom P90, an Adjusto-Matic Bridge and a 648mm scale length
RRP **£514**

Squier
Modified Tele Custom II
With an agathis body, two Duncan Designed soapbar single coils, independent volume and tone controls, maple fingerboard and 22 medium jumbo frets, this guitar is the budget version of the FRS. Available in black or blonde
RRP **£228**

with Teles is pretty much absent, but that's probably partly attributable to the Strat style hard-tail bridge.

These pickups are bona-fide single coils rather than stacked humbuckers, but they have reverse windings/reverse polarity so the hum is cancelled when the pickup selector is in the centre position. The volume levels of the two pickups are well balanced but each one has a voice of its own.

The bridge setting sounds clear and crisp without being trebly. The neck setting is just as clear, but the tone has a rounded, mellow and almost semi-acoustic character. Consequently the in between position adds another sonic flavour with a hint of scooped mid phasiness that sounds superb for country-inspired Travis picking styles.

Crank up an amp or activate an overdrive pedal and P90s usually change personality in a flash. These pickups are no exception and the sweet-natured woodiness instantaneously shifts towards raw gritty rock tones with real bite and more than a hint of menace. Sustain is impressive and note definition is maintained. You might get more harmonic complexity and overtones from an all-mahogany guitar with two P90s, but the FSR makes up for that with snappy transient attack and a more open voicing.

F-brand tuners with squared buttons reinforce an aura of the 1970s

Crank up the amp and the sweet-natured woodiness shifts towards gritty rock tones with bite and menace

Gibsonesque controls and a hardtail Strat bridge with bent steel saddles

Verdict

Many of you will be aware of an existing Squier model called the Squier Tele Custom II with Duncan Designed P90s that, outwardly at least, bears a very strong resemblance to the FSR. Every so often major guitar manufacturers bring out a budget model that's almost too good; the Custom II is a case in point and, having had the pleasure of reviewing it, we think it's one of the best value guitars in the current Fender/Squier catalogue. It's almost £725 cheaper than the FSR, too.

But having held both in our hands, there's no denying that the FSR is a much higher-level instrument than the Squier. It looks and feels far more expensive. The quality of the maple used for neck is in a different league, and the amber tone of the clear gloss finish is just about perfect. Whether you consider a rosewood fingerboard to be an upgrade on a maple board is a matter of personal taste, but most players would probably consider the FSR's alder body preferable to agathis. But the Custom FSR really wins out in the sound stakes because it's more nuanced, versatile and clear. Be warned, though – the FSR is a Special Edition, so if you're interested you'd better grab one fast.

FINAL SCORE

FENDER TELECASTER CUSTOM FSR	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**17**/20
Sound	**18**/20
Value for money	**15**/20
Vibe	**16**/20
TOTAL	**84%**

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WASHBURN
HB36 Vintage

The aged look isn't exclusive to the most famous twangy brand, and now Washburn has cooked up a lived-in semi-solid that offers serious mojo for your moolah. Review by **Hayden Hewitt**

FACTFILE

Washburn HB36 Vintage

DESCRIPTION **Aged and effortlessly cool semi-hollow electric.**
PRICE **£469**

BUILD **Maple and spruce body with maple glued-in neck and 22 fret ebony fingerboard**
ELECTRICS **Washburn 621 neck pickup and 623 bridge pickup. Two volumes, two tones, three-way switch**
LEFT HANDERS **No**
FINISH **Vintage sunburst**

SCALE LENGTH
629mm/24.75"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 43mm
12th fret 55mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 22mm
12th fret 25mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 35mm
Bridge 53mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 1.0mm
12th fret bass 2.0mm
WEIGHT **3.7kg/8.25lbs**

CONTACT **Sound Technology**
01462 480000
www.washburn.com

Whether it's teasing a finger-twisting chord in a smoky jazz bar, clawing out some gut-wrenching blues lines or simply crashing out huge chords through a giganta-stack, the semi-hollow, double cutaway design has always found a suitable home. Indeed, the guitar which the Washburn HB36 Vintage is clearly based on has proven to be a true musical chameleon with a great pedigree. The question is whether Washburn can capture that vibe and quality at around a quarter of the price of the 'real thing'.

There's no doubting the HB36 is a real looker. It employs quality materials such as a spruce top, flame maple back and sides; an ebony fretboard adds a real feeling of quality, and the ebony knobs and pickguard deliver a subtle sprinkling of magic on top.

Construction-wise we are in familiar territory with a maple centre block, hollow wings and a glued-in neck (albeit maple on this example rather than the usual mahogany). Finishing things off rather nicely is the subtly aged aspect of this guitar. Rather than looking like someone gave a child a packet of cheap sweets loaded with e-numbers and access to a belt sander, Washburn have taken a far more understated route and the HB36 appears to have a warm patina of age rather than abuse. The matt finish has some gentle sinking into the grain and the occasional (and small) dink and knock here and there.

Laminated maple back comes with a healthy dose of flame

Neck and headstock are bound, and aged sealed tuners have ebony buttons

The HB36 has a spruce top, maple back and sides and an ebony fingerboard, plus subtle ebony knobs and pickguard

Washburn has also aged the gold hardware, and here perhaps the aging is successful in an unintended manner, because rather than looking like an authentic worn gold-plated finish the bridge and tuners have an almost brass-like appearance which actually works well with this particular tobacco sunburst. Add to this the tasteful – and awfully well done – multi-laminate binding, and visually at least there is precious little here which would lead you to believe this was in any way a budget instrument. ➔

Like these? Try these...

Epiphone
Dot
Gibson's official affordable brand knows how to make a guitar which looks the part, and there are some street price bargains to be had
RRP **£299**

Vintage
VSA555
The classic formula in ebony and enlivened by split block markers and gold hardware. Typical Vintage in terms of value for money
RRP **£469**

Gibson
ES-335
True, it's not even close to cheap, but if you really want that name then there's little option but to get that overtime in and crack open the ISA
RRP **£2099 (Plain Top)**

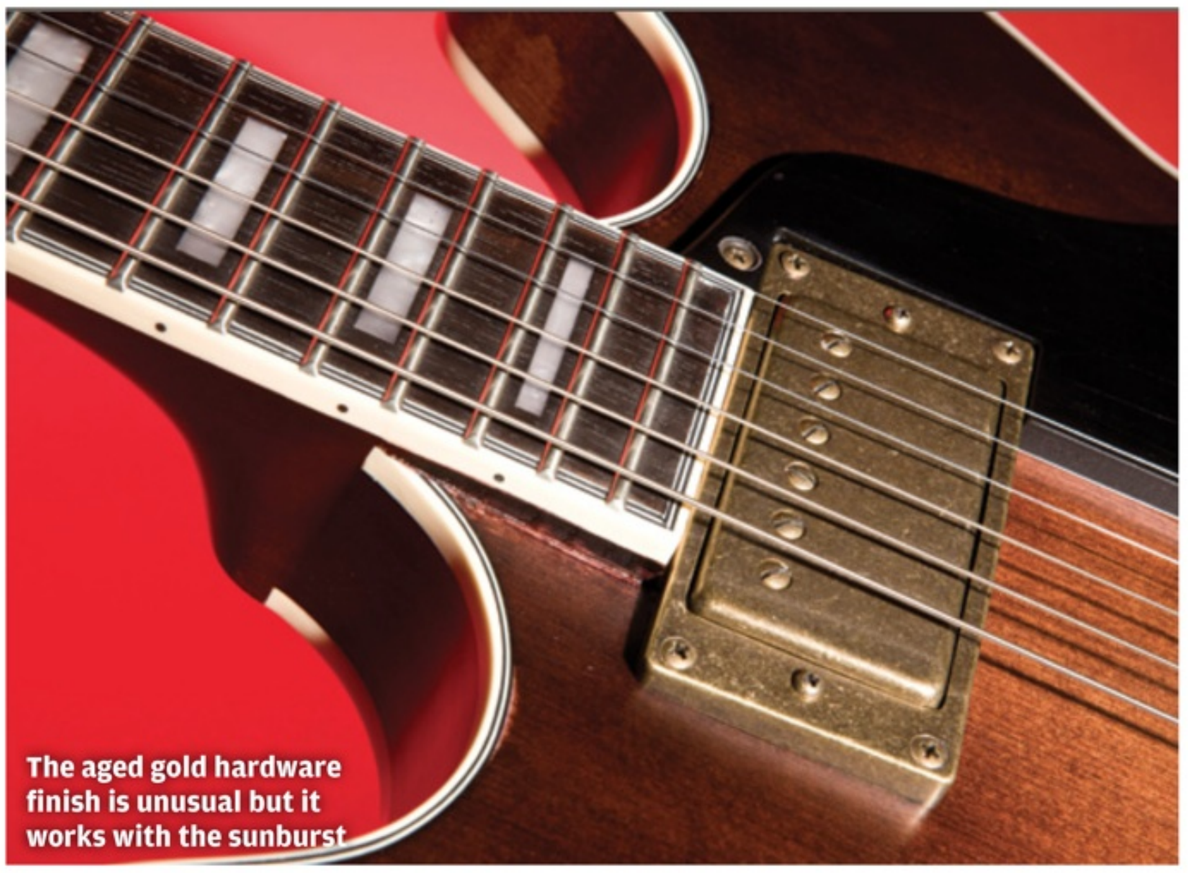
The neck is a real gem. Fitted with 22 medium frets nestling atop an ebony fretboard, the whole neck exudes quality in a way it really shouldn't at this price. Finishing is pretty much top notch and Washburn have nailed the dimensions perfectly with a neck that sits comfortably in the hand regardless of technique. Also worth a mention is the top fret access. If you hadn't played many alternative brands you might imagine the design lends itself to effortless dusty end access but this certainly isn't always the case. Here Washburn have tweaked the design slightly, ensuring this isn't a problem.

For hardware we have a tunomatic-style bridge which works exactly as it should and harbours no surprises. Keeping tuning in check up at the skinny end we have six Grover tuners.

Sounds

The HB36 is fitted with Washburn's own-design humbuckers, in this case a 621 in the neck and 623 in the bridge. Often this would be the weak link in any cost-conscious guitar, and although they might lack some of the detail and clarity of a set of pickups wound by hand by a man sat atop a mountain with a chamois on his head (I think that's how they do it) the OEM units on the HB36 aren't in any way a disappointment. Played clean the semi-hollow nature of the guitar shines through; it really is like having an extra dimension to your tone, an added depth of character.

The HB36 sunburst has that 'stained before lacquer' look. Knobs are ebony too


The aged gold hardware finish is unusual but it works with the sunburst

The Washburn HB36 is a good guitar full stop, with solid build quality, playability and some polished tones

Played through a clean amp you quickly find yourself in jazz territory. The neck pickup especially has an almost instant appeal. If you like skinny ties and wear shades indoors, you'll dig it. Allow your amp to get a little ragged around the edges and the HB36 slides effortlessly into a surprisingly authentic blues mode. The neck pickup can come across a touch too warm on occasion but you probably won't mind too much as the bridge pickup isn't so bright that you can't afford to boost the highs a little on your amp.

Although this style of guitar has never really been associated with truly high gain tones there's no denying its place in the rock stratosphere. Dial yourself in a healthy dose of power amp gain pushing just to the edge of break up and all your AC/DC needs will be met. Smashing out overdriven chords proves to be very diverting indeed, and you probably won't be able to remember the last time you spent so long on a G major chord.

Don't let the design or legacy stop you from exploring further because there's plenty more under the hood. While the pickups might struggle to give an amp a kick up the backside there is a definite effect to having lower output pickups and an overdriven amplifier, and it's rather a pleasant one. Pushing a large stack well into rock territory we managed to find a surprisingly authentic early Van Halen tone, really close to the brown *Running With The Devil* sound. Granted, a slightly more authentic set of PAF-style pickups would have pulled us that bit closer, but when you consider what we're using here you start to get an idea of the tonal scope Washburn have brought to the table with the HB36.

Crank the gain higher (we accept that many who buy this guitar probably won't) and the howling feedback starts to sound a little angrier. Given the restrained character of the pickups and the inherent nature of the guitar's construction you aren't going to get within shouting distance of a modern metal tone but what you do get is a huge wall of sound for which any sonic terrorist would find many uses.

Verdict

It's got to a point where – in the sub-£500 market – we don't expect anything less than a 'solid' instrument. What Washburn have delivered isn't just a good guitar for less than £500: the HB36 is a good guitar, full stop. Solid build quality, playability, and some surprisingly polished tones are all in evidence and at this price you could always replace the pickups and still hang on to your kidneys. If you're looking for a semi-hollow but don't want to break the bank you really should give the HB36 a whirl because it offers some serious bang for the buck.

FINAL SCORE

WASHBURN HB36 VINTAGE	
Build Quality	**16**/20
Playability	**17**/20
Sound	**16**/20
Value for money	**19**/20
Looks	**18**/20
TOTAL	**86%**

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Micro Terror head & PPC108 cab

After the Tiny Terror comes the Micro, a 20W head smaller than some effects we can think of. Don't say 'nano' to Orange, or they'll make an amp you'll lose in your pocket fluff. Review by **Richard Purvis**

FACTFILE

MICRO TERROR HEAD & PPC108 CAB

DESCRIPTION **20W hybrid head with ECC83 preamp valve and solid-state power amp; closed-back 1x8" cab with custom speaker, 8 ohms, rated 20W; both made in China**

PRICE **Micro Terror amp £99, PPC108 cab £59**

CONTROL PANEL **On/off switch, headphone output (1/4" jack), auxiliary input (1/8" jack); Volume, Tone, Gain; one guitar input**

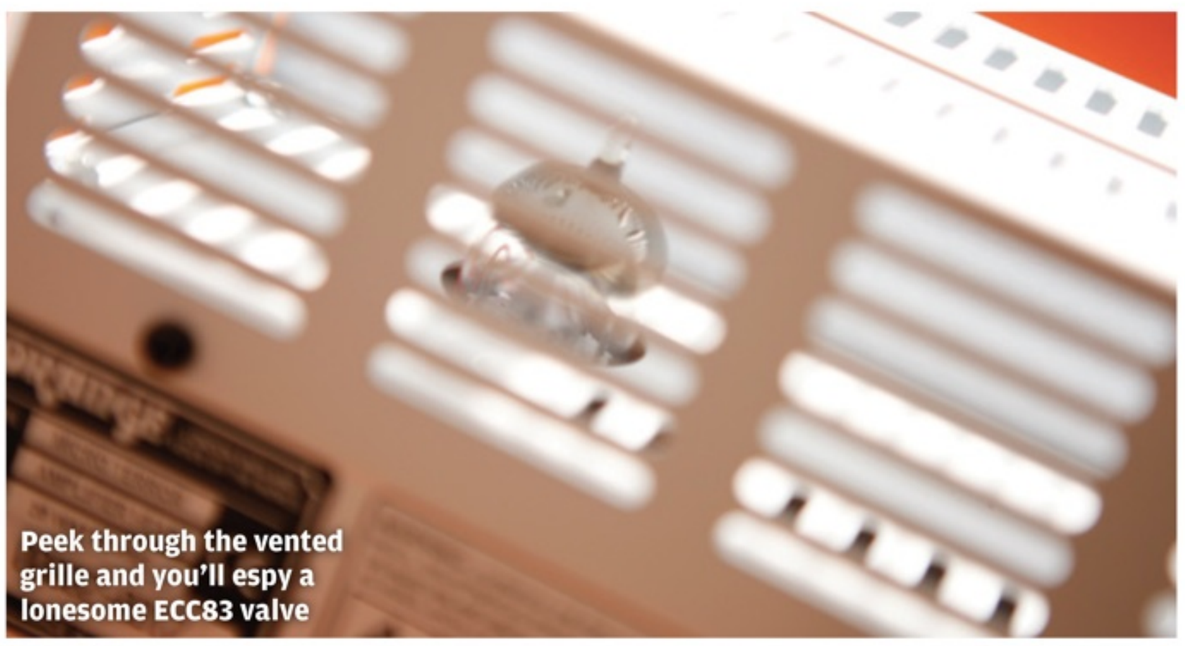
DIMENSIONS **Amp 16.5cm wide, 13.5cm high, 9.5cm deep; cab 26.5cm wide, 26.5cm high, 17cm deep**

WEIGHT **Amp 0.85kg/1.9lbs, cab 3.5kg/7.7lbs**

CONTACT **Orange Amps 020 8905 2828 www.orangeamps.com**

This is getting ridiculous. When the original Tiny Terror came out, we all marvelled at how Orange had managed to fit so much vintage rock tone into an amp the size of a lunchbox. Other versions have since followed – as indeed have other manufacturers, recognising the modern guitarist's need for more loudness and less back pain – but who ever thought things would get as dinky as this? It's the Micro Terror, and if this were your lunchbox you'd starve, because it's barely big enough to hold a half-eaten packet of Hula Hoops.

With an amp this small, and this cheap, there's got to be an element of compromise. Orange's approach has been to blur the line between 'real' valve amp and home practice toy: it's a hybrid, with one ECC83 tube on preamp duty and a solid-state output stage. Don't be expecting teeny tone, though – they reckon this little bleeder can churn out 20W RMS, which would actually make it more powerful than the standard Tiny Terror if such comparisons between valve and tranny amps were in any way reliable.


Peek through the vented grille and you'll espy a lonesome ECC83 valve

In an unsettling way, it looks like a full-size Tiny Terror that's sneakily moved further way when you weren't looking

The front panel has as many features as there's room for: a Gain control for the preamp dirt, a single Tone knob, and master Volume. There's also a headphone output for under-the-duvet jamming, and an auxiliary input for playing along with CDs, MP3s or anything else you can pump in there through a mini-jack lead. It's all neatly done, and in a slightly unsettling way the overall effect is of a full-size Tiny Terror that's sneakily moved further away when you weren't looking.

One mildly irritating design feature carried over from the bigger Terrors is that you still need to undo a whole load of fiddly little screws – eight in this case – to get the top 'cage' ➔

Like this? Try this...

Orange
Tiny Terror head
The original lunchbox valve amp, with a pair of EL84s delivering a mighty 15W of characterful vintage crunch
RRP **£360**

Vox
AC4TVH
All-valve practice head with a single EL84 output tube; add £155 for the matching 1x12" cabinet
RRP **£204**

Electro-Harmonix
22 Caliber
A 22W solid-state amp that thinks it's a pedal, with just a Volume control and Brightness switch
PRICE **£70 approx**

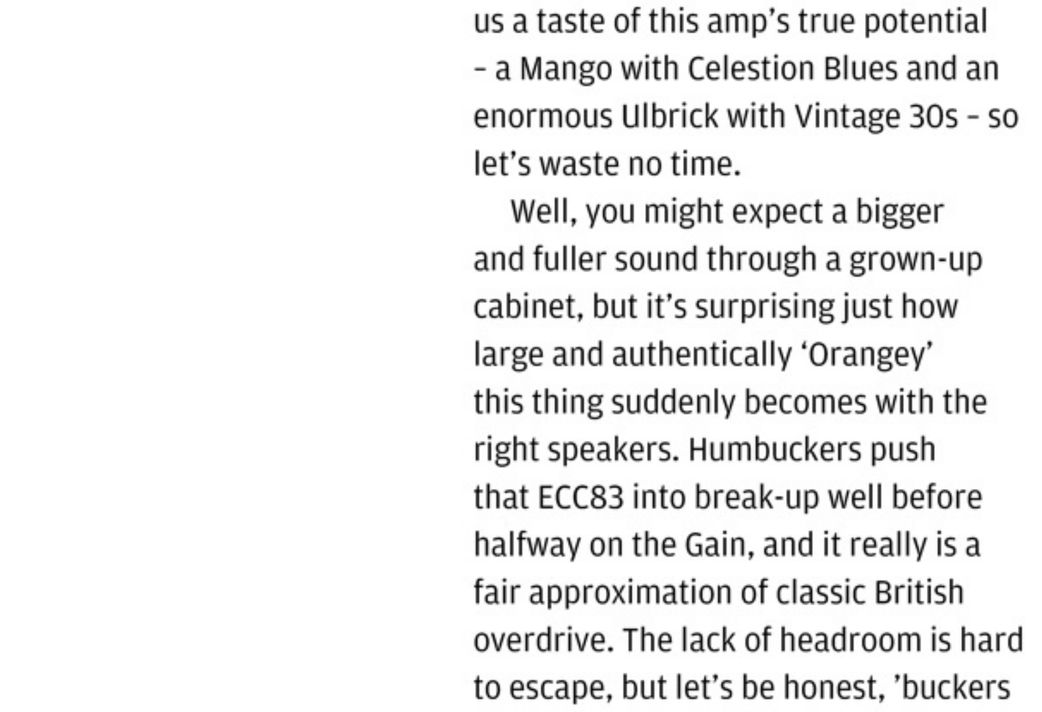
off for access to the valve. Another four screws hold the upper plate onto the chassis, and with this removed we have a clear view of the PCB. It's a tidy job, and again the whole thing looks uncannily scaled down – the caps and resistors are as miniature as they come, and they must have been soldered in by highly skilled Lego figures because there isn't a square millimetre to spare. There's a small heat sink by the power amp, which, for the benefit of those who know their chips, is an STA540; more familiar to Tube Screamer geeks will be the two JRC4558s lurking elsewhere on the board – so maybe that solitary tube isn't doing all the overdriving work.

Orange's recommended PPC108 cab is a closed-back 1x8" that's light enough to swat hornets with. It has the same textured vinyl, basketweave cloth and fruity badge as one of those Orange cabs that you could swat cows with, and it appears to be well put-together.

IN USE

The basic voice of the Micro Terror is characterised by extreme boxiness and lack of depth... but what do you expect from a single eight-inch speaker in a cab no bigger than your head? Luckily, we have a couple of 2x12s on hand to give us a taste of this amp's true potential – a Mango with Celestion Blues and an enormous Ulbrick with Vintage 30s – so let's waste no time.

Well, you might expect a bigger and fuller sound through a grown-up cabinet, but it's surprising just how large and authentically 'Orangey' this thing suddenly becomes with the right speakers. Humbuckers push that ECC83 into break-up well before halfway on the Gain, and it really is a fair approximation of classic British overdrive. The lack of headroom is hard to escape, but let's be honest, 'buckers and Orange have never been a recipe for glassy clean tones anyway. The most fun is to be had with both Volume and Gain somewhere around full. You may have to hide in the cupboard under the stairs to avoid squalling feedback, but back off just as much as you have to and the Micro Terror starts to seem like a lot of rawk for a hundred quid.



Master Volume, Tone, Gain: there's simply no room for anything more

When they say 'micro', they mean it. This iPhone is, we assure you, the standard issue size

The Micro Terror is a one-and-a-half trick pony, but add a much bigger cab and you'll forget all that in an instant

The EQ control is well judged without being spectacular; around the middle is where you'll find the most solid and balanced tones, with dullness at the far left of the dial and a thinned-out bark at the right. Brightening a dark guitar or softening a shrill one should be easy.

It's a pity to have to go back to the Orange cab, but it does deserve another chance – and to be fair, we're still dealing with a pretty cool sound if you're prepared to be realistic about the 'practice only' limitations of the 1x8 format. It's actually better with single-coils: a Jazzmaster sounds clear and spanky with the gain just shy of noon, and the overdriven tone is rich, throaty and loud... not loud enough to stop us going back to one of those 2x12s, though. Even then this amp may not be quite as powerful and three-dimensional as a good all-valve 20-watter, but as with humbuckers, the fullness of the crunch is such that you could almost forget you're not playing through a stadium-suitable Orange.

The headphone output should be viewed as a utilitarian feature rather than anything that's going to knock you over with sheer tone. It gives fine but rather plasticky-sounding results at cleaner settings, and turns ultra-fizzy when cranked. As a tool for late-night practice it'll do the job, but your ears will be relieved when you rip off the cans and play through a cab again.

That leaves the auxiliary input, a handy addition for those who enjoy a bit of play-along jamming through headphones or a speaker. It comes into the signal path after the preamp and tonestack so you can hear a pure signal – albeit a mono one, and not of the highest quality – while tweaking your guitar sound with the Tone and Gain controls.

VERDICT

There's no shortage of things to grumble about here. It's a one-and-a-half-trick pony at best, the cab is too small to generate any kind of room-filling tone, the headphone output and auxiliary input are cheap-sounding... but stick the Micro Terror between a decent guitar and a much bigger cab than the PPC108 and you'll forget all of that in an instant. It has much of the character of the all-valve Tiny Terror and it costs less than £100. Say no more.

FINAL SCORE

MICRO TERROR HEAD & PPC108 CAB	
Build quality	**18**/20
Versatility	**15**/20
Sound	**17**/20
Value for money	**20**/20
Looks	**19**/20
TOTAL	**89%**

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Ritchie Kotzen plays LAG Tramontane

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Gartone

Gartone
Regal 45

Point to point turret board wiring, carbon comp resistors, audio-grade signal capacitors, Mercury Magnetics transformers, KT66 power valves, custom Alnico speakers - and handmade here in the UK. Review by **Huw Price**

FACTFILE
Gartone Regal 45

SPECS **Two channel 45W valve combo with 2x12" custom voiced Tayden New Vintage alnico speakers, 2 x Harma KT66 power valves, GZ34 rectifier, Mercury Magnetics transformers and choke, turret board construction, birch ply cabinet. Made in the UK**
PRICE **£1995**

CONTROLS **Volume 1 & 2, Treble, Mid, Bass, Presence**

DIMENSIONS **53cm high, 70.5cm wide, 26.5cm deep**
WEIGHT **28kg/62lbs**

CONTACT **Gartone Amps**
07796 682530
info@gartoneamps.co.uk
www.gartoneamps.co.uk

The Marshall 'Bluesbreaker' combo is one of the shining icons of British rock, and Martin Garton's quest to build an authentic version began when James Skelly of the Coral complained that his reissue Marshall didn't nail Clapton's mid-1960s tone. Garton examined the amp and concluded that there were so many differences that it would be simpler to build a Bluesbreaker from scratch.

An exhaustive period of research followed where every component was analysed. The core ingredients of that landmark tone were identified as the original RS output transformer with its 6.6Kohm primary impedance, KT66 power valves and Celestion G12 alnico speakers; Garton sought out the closest modern equivalents and settled on Mercury Magnetics transformers and Harma KT66 valves. The Celestion G12 lives on as the Alnico Blue but Garton felt that the 15W power rating was insufficient. Instead he chose the Tayden New Vintage, voiced specially by the manufacturer for this amp.

Besides ditching the tremolo, the Regal 45 circuit is essentially stock JTM45 with minor alterations to the power supply and bias. Some tweaks were required to conform to today's safety standards and a couple of parts values were altered to get vintage voicing with modern components.

The Gartone follows the tone stack and two-channel format of the original, minus tremolo

Garton contracts out the cabinetwork but he does the covering in-house along with the electronic construction. I had a peek inside and I have never seen anyone do a neater wiring job, but the tolex was lifting slightly on one corner of the faceplate cut out. Still, at least it comes with a 10-year warranty.

This is a thrilling amp that retains an almost hi-fi like clarity and definition even when it's distorting like crazy

Sounds

I spoke with Garton a few days before I received his amp, joking that I'd be putting a fresh strings on my Lester and brushing up on my 'Beano' licks. He paused, then said, 'It will do that, of course... but it can do lot more.'

Once the amp arrived, I understood why. This is a thrilling amplifier that retains an almost hi-fi clarity, even ➔

Like this? Try this...

Marshall
1962 Bluesbreaker Reissue
Marshall's current reissue has the correct-sized cabinet, turret board wiring and a GZ34 rectifier but it runs with EL34 power valves and it's fitted with ceramic Greenback Celestion G12 speakers. Authentic Marshall tone, no doubt – but not really an authentic Bluesbreaker
RRP **£1,282**

Louis
Electric Bluesbreaker
This reissue from one of the most respected US boutique amp builders features Genelex KT66 valves and a custom output transformer with hand-built limited edition Greenback speakers and/or Celestion Alnico Golds
RRP **£2,995**

when it's distorting like crazy, and it maintains definition and tightness even when the speakers seem like they're about to burst out of the cabinet. It's also whisper-quiet, with barely any trace of hiss or humm.

Regardless of saturation levels the Regal 45 has a degree of chime and sparkle that allows you to explore the full frequency range of any guitar. You may hear tones from LP-type guitars that you hadn't realised they were capable of. Early Marshall-style circuits are synonymous with overdrive and distortion, but the superb quality of this amp's clean tones is equally impressive.

Tonal differences between the Normal and Bright channels are pretty profound. The Bright channel shimmers with an unusual degree of openness and zing; clean tones from humbuckers are not a problem, but plug in a guitar with single coils and you can do funk, twanging country or even jazz quite easily. In contrast, the Normal channel has a thicker and chewier quality that really suits warmer and more rounded clean tones.

The tone controls produce plenty of frequency swing, the Treble and Presence knobs having a particularly strong influence. This provides a wide range of sounds, allowing the Regal 45 to deliver the goods with a variety of guitars and pickups.

Both volume controls operate smoothly. Rather than jumping suddenly into life or reaching a ceiling above which nothing really changes, volume and overdrive increase gradually. Long before the Regal 45 reaches its raw, creamy, growling

The Tayden New Vintage 12" alnico speakers are spec'ed specially for this amplifier

The Regal 45 is more about complexity, dynamics and harmonic overtones than brutal crunch and sheer aggression

zenith, you'll encounter a full spectrum of overdrive tones from the point where single coils initiate break up between settings 3 and 4 on the volume controls.

Plenty of amps deliver fine clean tones and overdrive willingly, but dynamic response is surely the factor that separates decent amps from exceptional ones. The Regal 45 is without doubt one of the most dynamic and expressive amps I have ever had the privilege to play through. Hit the strings hard and you'll get deep, growling powerchords, while single notes effortlessly sustain with near vocal quality. Brush the strings lightly and, even at the same settings, the Regal 45 cleans up to display complex, subtle and surprising sweetness.

The Tayden speakers are integral to the tone. It's reasonable to assume that some of the Regal 45's chime and transparency is attributable to the alnico magnets and a degree of speaker breakup certainly augments the amp overdrive as the volume approaches maximum. The open-back cabinet also contributes to this amp's room-filling 3D quality; at times it may even fool you into thinking there's a built-in reverb.

The Harma KT66 output valves recreate the GEC Osram KT66 from grid structure to bottle shape and even brown bases

Verdict

Although the Regal 45 can produce huge amounts of overdrive/distortion, to my ears the sound differs from the EL34-loaded Marshalls I've used. I'd suggest that the Regal 45 is more about complexity, dynamic response and harmonic overtones and less about brutal crunch and sheer aggression. In other words, it's a far more sophisticated, versatile and subtle guitar amp. The valve rectifier also provides a touch-feely quality that all but eliminates any intense, spiky transients, making the Regal 45 feel very easy to play even at high volume. It's a remarkable amplifier in every respect, and it's a product that anybody chasing authentic early Marshall tone should consider.

FINAL SCORE

GARTONE REGAL 45	
Build Quality	**19**/20
Versatility	**18**/20
Sound	**19**/20
Value for money	**18**/20
Looks	**18**/20
TOTAL	**92%**

Creativity Unleashed

Allan Holdsworth has been on a lifelong search for the ultimate guitar that offers him the “less is more” aspect for light weight and comfort, along with the ideal tone and playability.

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HH Series guitars are available in 1 or 2 pickup models with fixed or tremolo bridges. Order one from Carvin’s Custom Shop with your choice of figured maple top & color. Unleash your creativity with the guitar that inspires Allan Holdsworth.

”My new Carvin HH1X has the ideal neck, fingerboard and fretwire along with the compact size & comfort I love in a headless guitar. The playability and tone are incredible. I started touring with my HH1X the week it was built.”
– Allan Holdsworth

HH1X
single pickup model with Tremolo
shown with Pearl Blue finish

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CARVIN
www.carvinworld.com

HH2
dual pickup model with fixed bridge
shown with Honeyburst Finish on
Flame Maple

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OE SW AS MC
+18
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125 250 500 1K 2K 4K 8K
OUTPUT
BP
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SAVE SELECT
ON/OFF
(HOLD)
PRESET SELECT
PROGRAMMABLE EQ
SOURCE AUDIO
soundblox 2
DIMENSION REVERB
TIME
E-DOME
PLATE 1
PLATE 2
ARENA
STAGE
SPRING 1
SPRING 2
CLUB
ROOM
MODVERB
ECHO
METAL BOX
MIX
WET
PRE-DELAY (OUTPUT)
DIFFUSE (RATE)
BASS (DEPTH)
OPTION SELECT
MIDI
EXP
CONTROL INPUT
OPTION
TREBLE
SOURCE AUDIO
EXPRESSION PEDAL

SOURCE AUDIO

SA170 EQ, Soundbox2 Reverb, SA161 Expression Pedal & Hot Hands Adapter

Source Audio aspires to blend sonic loveliness with a wide range of connectivity and control options, and with the Hot Hands they also offer a whole new reason to shake your thing. **Marcus Leadley** investigates

The world is divided into players who just want guitars and amps that sounds great and those who embrace technology as a full partner in the creative process. Source Audio is riding the leading edge of the wave of digital innovation, which is about letting the technology stand on its own two feet to deliver new sound combinations with all manner of exciting interface and programming opportunities.

Setting up the AS170 with four EQs for different sounds is a breeze, and the auto-scroll function will get you noticed

AS170 Programmable EQ

The EQ pedal is an under-used device. Introducing an EQ into your set-up is all about creating guitar sounds beyond the limits of basic amp tones and pickup characters. Placement before a distortion pedal or in an effects loop can influence preamp (think Van Halen or Slash) or even the power amp distortion characteristics. A graphic EQ pedal can also be used as a volume boost for soloing – with or without a frequency 'colour' adjustment – or it can create the classic scooped-mids tone for retro funk rhythm.

With four presets, the SA170 can do all this four times over. Setting up each is simplicity itself. Once selected, the rotary encoder adjusts any one of the seven frequency bands; these are selected by pressing the forward or back arrows keys. A further eighth low band (for bass players!) can be selected from among the 'Backpage' features – accessed, along with parameter scroll speed and MIDI channel, by pressing the left arrow key and Save simultaneously.

There is also a knob that lets you tweak the post-EQ signal level if your adjustments have cut or boosted the sound. If you just want a clean boost to push an amp into breakup for soloing, then select a preset, leave the EQ flat, and boost the signal. Press save – job done. If you're the sort of player who performs live to a sequencer or controls external processors from a multi-FX that outputs MIDI you can control the AS170 remotely to change presets and turn the unit on and off.

Sounds

Frequency adjustment is musical, and you can look away from the little green lights and fine-tune things with your ear. Pushing the upper frequency bands will introduce some noise, but this is acceptable at the price.

It took about five minutes to set up a clean boost and three EQ settings: a scooped mid patch for funky chicken moments; a mid-enhanced/treble roll-off for an instant crying-tone lead sound; and a less fierce version of the same for comping jazzy chords. The ability to scroll between presets by holding down the footswitch is great for between-song changes.

There is also an unexpected auto-scroll function that allows you to cycle audibly through each of your presets, which lets you create all manner of sequencer, gated or stepped wah type sounds. You really have to dedicate the whole pedal to this, as simply scrolling through a bunch of unrelated presets is a bit random, but it's a great extra facility and it will get the AS170 noticed.

FINAL SCORE

AS170 PROGRAMMABLE EQ	
Build Quality	**19**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**18**/20
Value for money	**18**/20
Vibe	**17**/20
TOTAL	**90%**

FACTFILE

AS170 Programmable EQ

DESCRIPTION **American-designed EQ, built in China. Four user presets and MIDI control option**
RRP **£139.95**

CONTROLS **Preset Select, Output level, Parameter rotary, Scroll arrows, Save.**

Like this? Try this...

Boss
EQ20
Dual pedal format offering 10 band EQ and nine user presets for custom sounds
RRP **£149**

MXR
M108 Graphic EQ
A solid warhorse – not programmable, but rugged with full 10 band capability on analogue sliders
RRP **£110**

FACTFILE

Soundbox2 Dimension Reverb

DESCRIPTION **12 programme mono reverb pedal with two user presets, directly ported for expression pedal or Hot Hands control**
RRP **£189.95**

CONTROLS **Time, Option (Pre-delay, Diffusion, Rate, Bass, Depth) Treble, Mix**

Like this? Try this...

Electro-Harmonix
Cathedral Reverb
Eight programmable reverbs from a unit offering stereo input and output
RRP **£148**

TC Electronic
Nova Reverb
Five digital stereo reverbs in a twin stompbox offering lots of editing potential
RRP **£211**

FACTFILE

SA161 Dual Expression Pedal

DESCRIPTION **Rocker-style expression pedal for use with Source Audio and third part effects: can control up to three devices simultaneously**
RRP **£104.95**

CONNECTIONS **Two ¼" TRS outputs, 3.5mm Source Audio sensor out, 50kOhm range adjust (functions on TRS output 2 only)**

Like this? Try this...

M Audio
Expression pedal
Standard but rugged single pedal controller
RRP **£44**

Roland
EV5 Expression pedal
Simple design and a nice sturdy build quality
RRP **£82.11**

FACTFILE

Hot Hands Wireless Adapter

DESCRIPTION **Combination wireless receiver and ring accelerometer controller**
PRICE **£124.95**

CONTACT **Strings & Things 01273 440442 www.stringsandthings.co.uk**

Soundblox 2 Dimension Reverb

Presented in a custom cast-aluminium housing, this unit looks unique. You can interface an expression pedal, the Hot Hands wireless controller, or use MIDI via an additional Source MIDI pedal. Live sound engineers generally cringe at reverb pedals as they'd much rather stay in control at the desk end. Using mechanical reverbs (plates or amp-like spring) live is one thing, but adding modelled physical spaces is asking for trouble. That said, a flexible reverb offers loads of potential, especially in the studio. There are 12 settings: a range of room sizes, a couple of plates and springs, an echo, and a couple of special effects, Metal Box and Modverb. You can set up two presets and switch between them.

With great editability this is more like a studio reverb than a pedal, though mono means some limitations. Time (feedback), Mix (wet/dry signal) and Treble have dedicated knobs and an Option rotary can be toggled between Pre-delay, Diffusion, modulation Rate, Bass cut and Modulation Depth.

Things get even more interesting when you plug in a Source Audio **Dual Expression Pedal** (pictured left) as you can assign any one of the nine adjustable parameters to foot control. You can swell the amount of reverb for dramatic effect or control the reverb send, enabling you to play dry against your own reverb tails, which sounds very expressive. While Source Audio pedals connect via a bespoke four-connector 3.5mm cable, the expression pedal also has two ¼" TRS outputs so it can be used as a controller for two additional third part effects.

You can also assign parameter control to the **Hot Hands Wireless Adapter** (also pictured left). A small FM receiver is plugged in to the Multi Function Input and adjustments are made using a ring controller, which contains an accelerometer. They suggest you wear it on your hand, foot or headstock. Basically, you have to shake something to get a result! It works, but a whole new playing technique is required; waggling your pick hand in the air means it's not playing the strings, so hammer-ons or feedback become essential. Attempting to put the ring on my foot or the guitar headstock led to the sort of insane leaping about that I would not wish to attempt in public. In fairness, reverb parameters are a little subtle and the device can be seen functioning well in promotional videos – especially in relation to bass wah.

> Putting the Hot Hands on my foot and the headstock led to the kind of leaping about I would not attempt in public

Sounds

The Dimension Reverb delivers clean, crisp, modern digital reverb in many different flavours. Working the pre-delay control is an effective way of creating slapback effects, adjusting apparent room size or adding clarity by 'drifting' the reverb start time away from the played note. Diffusion controls the spread or smear of the effect, and Rate animates the reverb with subtle 'atmospheric' textures. Working Rate and Depth creates different shades of chorus-style undercurrents. While the 2.5 second echo time isn't the longest, it's adequate. You can play in the bathroom or an arena and replicate many eras of classic guitar sounds.

Verdict

If I were looking to buy a graphic EQ I'd seriously consider the Source Audio. The programmability makes it flexible; it has a very small footprint, and while it cannot add the colour and richness of a valve EQ it is neither cold nor clinical. It's a breeze to adjust and I like the scanning mode – plenty of scope for creating challenging riffs. The Dimension Reverb is also excellent. The sounds are rich and three-dimensional and it's clean and adjustable enough to enhance home studio recording. The Dual Expression pedal is a quality, chunky and practical piece of kit, but as far as the Hot Hands wireless adapter goes the jury is still out – though with wah or distortion it might offer some interesting and expressive results.

FINAL SCORE

SOUNDBLOX2 DIMENSION REVERB	
Build Quality	**19**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**18**/20
Value for money	**18**/20
Vibe	**17**/20
TOTAL	**90%**

FINAL SCORE

SA161 DUAL EXPRESSION PEDAL	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**18**/20
Value for money	**16**/20
Vibe	**15**/ 20
TOTAL	**85%**

FINAL SCORE

HOT HANDS WIRELESS ADAPTER	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**17**/20
Sound	**16**/20
Value for money	**16**/20
Vibe	**17**/20
TOTAL	**84%**

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FRET-King by Trev Wilkinson

Black Label 'DBC'

"The way the Eclat DBC guitar rings, even acoustically, is just incredible. I love P90 pickups – and I have done ever since I saw Steve Marriott and Mick Ralphs using them – so the Wilkinson W90B is the business. The thumb scoop is a great idea too, and it allows me easy access to those high frets, even when the guitar is slung really low.

The DBC is exactly what it says it is – a pure rock 'n' roll guitar, and I'm pure rock 'n' roll; I love it!"

Dave 'Bucket' Colwell

Guitarist magazine

★★★★

'Anyone need a raw rock machine? This is it'

Dave Burrluck, Guitarist magazine.

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Black Label Eclat 'DBC'

A hard working and hard playing rock guitar-meister, Bucket's talents have seen him playing to thousands of fans across the globe in his tenures with Paul Rodgers' Bad Company, and working with the likes of Humble Pie. A songwriter of note too, Bucket has written for Iron Maiden, and latterly with his Bucket & Co. project cooperated with the likes of Steve Conte, Edwin McCain, Danny Bowes, Spike from The Quireboys, Jaz Lochrie and Adrian Smith.

The DBC is a no-fuss rock machine inspired by a workhorse instrument Bucket has played for years.

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PIGTRONIX

Fat Drive

This all-analogue little porker promises everything from bluesy overdrive to rich saturation and has a tone control for tweaks. Review by **Richard Purvis**

You don't get many pigs in green goggles round here... but you do get one on the box if you buy a Pigtronix pedal, and for most of us that's surely reason enough to own at least one of these American-made units. But just in case it isn't, they also happen to sound good, well, pigging good. The company is best-known for outlandish stompboxes with a lot more knobs and switches than this one, but they clearly know when to play it simple; and with overdrive, a short and uncluttered signal path is generally what people want.

This isn't any old overdrive, though. It promises 'multi-stage tube-emulated clipping' and to that end uses a CMOS chip, as found in the acclaimed Way Huge Red Llama. The 'Fat' part of the name might suggest a dollop of added low-end content, but the Tone control is actually a passive treble filter rather than an active bass booster; it's bypassed when fully clockwise. The other feature to note is the 'More' toggle switch, which adds a second helping of gain.

The pedal comes with an 18v power supply in the box but can also run on a standard 9v unit (at the expense of some headroom); what it won't run on is a battery, as there's nowhere to put one. It's well-built and, with apologies to the dude in the goggles, looks as tasty as a bacon sandwich.

Sounds

Plugging an SG into a clean amp with the Fat Drive's gain set low, its 'tweed Fender' intentions are quickly apparent. It's a super-sweet tone, breaking up in a convincingly amp-like way with just a tendency towards fartiness on open chords that you might have to watch out for. The bottom end is full and chunky enough to justify the name, and it's certainly not a harsh overdrive: with humbuckers at least, you'll probably find you can leave the tone on full to let all the treble through. Push the gain control and you move smoothly into rich and sticky overdrive without losing any of that warmth; then flick the 'More' switch and your sound gets a hefty kick in the direction of pure fuzz – this is more like the sort of sonic extremism that Pigtronix is famed for.

The Fat Drive has a super-sweet tone, breaking up in a convincing amp-like way with a full, chunky bottom end

With single-coils, the tone control becomes more useful – Fenders that sound sweet and chimey at clean settings can quickly turn spitty when driven hard, but the Fat Drive allows you to dial out as much of that top end as you need to without killing the tone. It also cleans up really nicely when you back off just a touch on the guitar's volume. And the voltage thing? Switching to a standard 9v adapter doesn't make a massive difference, but it's certainly worth using the supplied 18v unit for maximum clarity.

Verdict

Straightforward yet versatile, beefy yet transparent, 'boutique' in build yet reasonably priced... this pedal presents itself as a short cut to tweed-style overdrive tones, and that's exactly what it delivers. No porkies.

FINAL SCORE

PIGTRONIX FAT DRIVE	
Build Quality	**19**/20
Playability	**17**/20
Sound	**17**/20
Value for money	**18**/20
Looks	**18**/20
TOTAL	**89%**

FACTFILE

Fat Drive

DESCRIPTION **Analogue overdrive pedal. 18v power supply included (runs on 9v-18v but no battery compartment). Made in USA**

PRICE **£115**

CONTROLS **Volume, Gain and Tone controls; 'More' toggle switch for gain boost; on/bypass footswitch**

CONTACT **Musictrack**
01767 313447
www.pigtronix.com
www.musictrack.co.uk

Like this? Try this...

Lazy J
Cruiser
Deliciously tweedy overdrive pedal from the boutique amp-builder of the moment
RRP **£238**

Lone Wolf Blues
House Rocker
Quirky American overdrive/distortion with rich, valve-like LED clipping and a variable bass boost
RRP **£124**

Hao
Sole Pressure
Fine Japanese overdrive with a Fender-like voice that can easily match the Pigtronix for chubbiness
PRICE **$157**

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Danelectro Dano 63
Electric guitar
Reissue model, masonite with plywood core body, maple neck, rosewood with pearloid inlay fretboard, 19 frets, 2x 63's lipstick style Alnico pickups, die cast tuners, pro hardware.

Finish: Red Burst **o. code 205005** € 173.- £ 143.-
Finish: Tangerine **o. code 205006** € 173.- £ 143.-
Finish: Black **order code 205002** € 173.- £ 143.-

Danelectro Dead On 67
Electric guitar
Upgraded reissue, solid basswood body, bolt-on maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 21 frets, double action truss rod, 2x volume- and 2x tone controls, 3-way toggle switch.

Finish: Agent Orange **order code 228277** € 189.- £ 156.-
Finish: Black **order code 228284** € 189.- £ 156.-
Finish: Limey **order code 228287** € 189.- £ 156.-

Danelectro Wild Thing
Electric guitar
Plywood body, tape binding, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 21 frets, 2 lipstick single-coils, traditional bridge with rosewood saddle, toggle switch.

Candy Apple Red **o. code 265345** € 189.- £ 156.-
Black **o. code 265347** € 189.- £ 156.-
Candy Apple Blue **order code 265346** € 239.- £ 197.-

Danelectro DE 59 Dano Black
Electric guitar
Masonite body/back/top, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 21 frets, pro hardware, 2 beefed-up lipstick pickups.

Finish: Black **o. code 111872** € 215.- £ 177.-
Finish: Keen Green **o. code 111877** € 215.- £ 177.-
Finish: Blue **order code 111875** € 215.- £ 177.-

Danelectro Reissue 59 Double Cutaway
Electric guitar
Masonite body (back and top), poplar neck, rosewood fretboard, notched metal base with a rosewood saddle, 21 frets, 2x beefed-up lipstick pickups.

Finish: Black **order code 243060** € 259.- £ 214.-
Finish: Copper **order code 243063** € 215.- £ 177.-
Finish: White „Seal" **order code 243065** € 215.- £ 177.-

Epiphone Les Paul Standard
Electric guitar
Mahogany & alder body, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, trapezoid inlays, 2x humbuckers, chrome hardware, tune-o-matic bridge, stopbar tailpiece, 3-way toggle switch, 2x volume controls, 2x tone controls. Finish: Ebony

order code 124838 € 295.- £ 243.-

Epiphone Explorer 1958 Korina
Electric guitar
Korina body, mahogany neck, 2x humbucker pickups, 1x toggle switch, gold hardware. Finish: Black.

order code 165182 € 359.- £ 296.-

Fender Standard Strat 2011 MN
Electric guitar
Made in Mexico, alder body, maple neck (modern C shape), 21 medium frets, scale: 648mm, saddle width: 42mm, 3x standard single-coils, 5-way switch, vintage-style synchronized tremolo, 3-ply parchment pickguard.

Finish: Arctic White **order code 270956**
Finish: Black **order code 270949** € 458.- £ 378.-

Epiphone Les Paul Ultra III
Electric guitar
Chambered mahogany body, set maple neck, rosewood fretboard, ProBucker 2 (neck) and ProBucker 3 (bridge) humbuckers, Shadow NanoMag piezo pickup, new Shadow chromatic tuner built in bridge pickup mounting ring, 2 separate outputs, nickel hardware.

Midnight Sapphire **order code 261053** € 548.- £ 452.-
Faded Cherry Sunburst **order code 261051** € 589.- £ 486.-

Gibson LP Studio '50 Tribute DB TM
Electric guitar
Exclusive made for Thomann, chambered mahogany body, maple top, dark back, 50s mahogany neck, toasted maple fretboard, 22 frets, scale: 628mm, 2 volume and 2 tone control, 3 way toggle switch, Gibson 490R humbucker (neck), Gibson 498T humbucker (bridge), incl. gigbag. Finish: Satin Ebony.

order code 270874 € 639.- £ 527.-

Gibson LP Studio 60's Tribute DB
Electric guitar
Chambered mahogany body, 60's slim taper mahogany neck profile, dark back satin, baked maple fretboard, 2 Gibson P-90 single coils, Grover green key tuners, 2 volume and 2 tone controls, chrome hardware, incl. Gibson deluxe gigbag.

Honeyburst **o. code 271698** € 639.- £ 527.-
Satin Vintage Sunburst **order code 276938** € 639.- £ 527.-

Gibson Les Paul Studio Limited
Electric guitar
Les Paul model, carved top, mahogany body, set mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 490R/498T AlNiCo humbuckers, tune-o-matic bridge, stopbar tailpiece, chrome hardware, includes original case.

Worn Brown **o. code 198816** € 639.- £ 527.-
Worn Cherry **order code 225129** € 639.- £ 527.-

Gibson LP Studio 60's Tribute
Electric guitar
Mahogany neck, mahogany neck, 60's slim taper neck profile, rosewood fretboard, 2 Gibson P-90 single-coils, Grover green key tuners, used look, incl. Gibson deluxe gigbag, Finish: Worn Gold Top.

order code 260178 € 639.- £ 527.-

Gibson LP Studio '50 Tribute VS TM
Electric guitar
Exclusive made for Thomann, chambered mahogany body, maple top, 50s mahogany neck, toasted maple fretboard, 22 frets, scale: 628mm, 2 volume and 2 tone control, 3 way toggle switch, Gibson 490R humbucker (neck), Gibson 498T humbucker (bridge), incl. gigbag. Finish: Vintage Sunburst.

order code 275266 € 689.- £ 568.-

Gibson Les Paul Studio
Electric guitar
Les Paul model, mahogany body, set mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, 2x humbucker pickups, chrome hardware, incl. case.

Finish: Ebony **o. code 134274** € 969.- £ 799.-
Finish: Fireburst **order code 211278** € 1135.- £ 936.-

Gibson Midtown Std. FR Bigsby
Electric guitar
ES style, mahogany body, maple top, 60's slim taper mahogany neck, white binding, black richlite fretboard, 22 frets, 1x Classic '57 (Alnico II) and 1x Classic '57+ (Alnico II) pickups, Bigsby B-70 tremolo, incl. Gibson DSDC hardshell case with white plush. Finish: Faded Red (nitro cellulose).

order code 267959 € 1085.- £ 895.-

Gibson Firebird Studio Non-Reverse
Electric guitar
Limited edition, 300pcs. worldwide, mahogany body, set mahogany neck, Mini Grover Kidney Button tuners, baked maple fretboard, 22 frets, 3x coil-tapped P-90 (Alnico V) pickups, 3-way switch, tune-o-matic bridge, stop bar tailpiece, finish: vintage sunburst nitro, incl. Gibson Firebird case.

order code 268551 € 1090.- £ 899.-

Line 6 James Tyler JTV-59 Variax
Modeling guitar
Mahogany body, curved maple top, set mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, L.R. Baggs Radiance Hex piezo pickup, 2 Alnico humbuckers, incl. bag, Line6 Workbench, Li-Ion battery, power supply and Variax Workbench USB adapter.

Finish: Cherry Sunburst **order code 252059**
Finish: Black **order code 252060** € 1290.- £ 1064.-

Gibson 50th Anniv. Derek Trucks
Electric guitar
Mahogany body, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, scale: 628mm, 2x Gibson '57 Classic humbuckers, 2 volume and 2 tone controls, chrome hardware, incl. Gibson case. Finish: Antique Heritage Cherry.

order code 269714 € 1429.- £ 1179.-

Fender Empress Telecaster
Electric guitar
Tele-Bration, special run, empress body, modern C-shaped maple neck, maple fretboard, 22 frets, Highway One pickup set, Highway One bridge, Grease Bucket tone system, incl. case.

Vintage White **o. code 259076** € 1599.- £ 1319.-
Honeyburst **order code 259077** € 1599.- £ 1319.-

Gibson LP Std. Traditional Pro
Electric guitar
Non-chambered mahogany body, maple top, mahogany neck with '60s profile, rosewood fretboard, trapezoid perloid inlays, tune-o-matic bridge, stopbar tailpiece, locking Grover tuners, potted BurstBucker 3 & '57 Classic humbucker pickups, incl. case.

Vintage Sunb. **o. code 232742** € 1666.- £ 1374.-
Finish: Ebony **order code 232739** € 1579.- £ 1303.-

Gibson Les Paul Standard 2008
Electric guitar
Mahogany body, AA grade figured maple top, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 629mm scale, 43mm nut width, trapezoid inlays, 22 frets, 1x Burstbucker Pro 2 (bridge) & 1x Burstbucker Pro 1 (neck), TonePros locking bridge and string holder, Grover locking machine heads, incl. black snakeskin case. Finish: Heritage Cherry Sunburst.

order code 214842 € 2099.- £ 1732.-

Gibson SG Std. Reissue V.O.S.
Electric guitar
Original vintage specs, mahogany body, 60's mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, Burstbucker 1 & 2 humbuckers pickups, maestro tremolo, incl. Custom Shop case. Finish: Faded Cherry.

order code 193723 € 2269.- £ 1872.-

Rickenbacker 360 FG
Electric guitar
Deluxe thinline model, hollow body, maple body, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 24 frets, scale: 629mm, saddle width: 41.4mm, mono/stereo output, triangle inlays, 2 Hi-Gain pickups, Schaller tuners, finish: FireGlo, incl. case.

order code 132977 € 2359.- £ 1946.-

Gretsch G6128T-TVP Power Jet
Electric guitar
Arched laminated maple top, semi-hollow one-piece mahogany body, ebony fretboard, 22 frets, 2x TV Jones PowerTron pickups, pinned rosewood based adjust-o-matic bridge, Gretsch Bigsby B3C vibrato tailpiece, chrome hardware, incl. G6238 deluxe hardshell case. Finish: Black.

order code 190926 € 2444.- £ 2016.-

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Fender Squier SA-105 CE

Acoustic guitar

Dreadnought with cutaway, laminated spruce top, back and sides laminated nato, nato neck, rosewood fretboard, scale: 643mm, Fishman Isys-T pickup system.

Finish: Black
order code 268336
Finish: Natural
order code 268342
Finish: Sunburst
order code 268344
€ 99.- £ 82.-

Fender CD-60

Acoustic guitar

Laminated spruce top, back and sides laminated mahogany, nato neck, sonokeling fretboard, scale: 643mm, saddle width: 43mm.

Black
o. code 190654
€ 119.- £ 98.-
Natural
o. code 190655
€ 119.- £ 98.-
Sunburst
o. code 190656
€ 119.- £ 98.-

Harley Benton HBX5TBK

Acoustic guitar

Cutaway, quilted maple top, mahogany back & sides, rosewood fretboard, integrated pickup system with 4-band EQ. Finish: Transparent Black

order code 165300
€ 122.- £ 101.-

Harley Benton HBF-200 NT

Acoustic guitar

Folk style, solid spruce top, rosewood back & sides, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, slotted headstock, tree inlays, 20 frets, satin chrome tuners with white knobs, 632mm scale, 42mm saddle width. Finish: Natural High Gloss

order code 212826
€ 189.- £ 156.-

Epiphone EL-00

Acoustic guitar

Historic collection, small body line, solid spruce top, mahogany back & sides, 628mm scale, 41.9mm saddle width, chrome hardware. Finish: Vintage Sunburst

order code 153674
€ 235.- £ 194.-

Epiphone EJ-200CE

Acoustic guitar

Cutaway, spruce top, maple body and neck, King inlays, eSonic 2 preamp pickup system, gold hardware, finish: natural.

Natural
o. code 210115
€ 295.- £ 243.-
Vintage Sunburst
order code 212786
€ 295.- £ 243.-

Martin Guitars LXM

Acoustic guitar

LXM Little Martin, top, back and sides spruce pattern HPL textured finish, neck natural stratabond, fretboard Morado/Rosewood, 20 frets, scale: 584mm, saddle width: 42,8mm, Gotoh nickel tuning machines, incl. padded gigbag.

order code 173139
€ 295.- £ 243.-

The Loar LH-250-SN

Acoustic guitar

Folk style, solid spruce top, back and sides solid mahogany, mahogany neck, rosewood fretboard, Abalone/M.O.P. inlays headstock, open butterbean tuners, scale: 648mm, nut width: 42.9mm, bone nut. Finish: Sunburst.

order code 273516
€ 385.- £ 318.-

Recording King RD-227

Acoustic guitar

Dreadnought style, solid AA sitka spruce top, back and sides solid rosewood, mahogany neck, vintage V neck profile, dovetail neckjoint, ebony fretboard, ebony bridge, abalone snowflakes fretboard inlays, torch MOP/Abalone headstock logo, open geared butterbean tuning machines, gold plated. Finish: Natural.

order code 269115
€ 537.- £ 443.-

Martin Guitars DRS1

Acoustic steel guitar

Solid sapele body and top, A-frame bracing, rust stratabond neck, black richlite fretboard, 20 frets, scale: 645mm, nut width: 42.85mm, black pickguard, Fishman Sonitone pickup, incl. 345 harshell case. Finish: Natural.

order code 260401
€ 749.- £ 618.-

Martin Guitars D-1 GT

Acoustic guitar

Dreadnought model, solid sitka spruce top, back and sides solid sapele, modified hybrid X scalloped bracing, stratabond neck, rosewood fretboard, 20 frets, scale: 645mm, saddle width: 43mm, incl. case, finish: natural gloss top.

order code 261819
€ 877.- £ 724.-

Martin Guitars D-16RGT

Acoustic guitar

Solid spruce top, rosewood back and sides, solid east Indian rosewood bridge and fretboard, 20 frets (14 clear), nut width: 43mm, chrome tuners, incl. hardshell case, high gloss finish.

order code 235615
€ 1179.- £ 973.-

Takamine TSF48C

Acoustic guitar

Santa Fe series, cutaway, solid spruce top, back and sides solid rosewood, mahogany neck, ebony fretboard, laser-cut american eagle inlays, 21 frets, Takamine CTP-2 preamp with pickup, finish: natural highgloss, incl. case.

order code 218988
€ 1479.- £ 1220.-

Lakewood D-32

Acoustic guitar

Dreadnought model, solid european AAA spruce top, back and sides solid rosewood, one piece mahogany neck, ebony fretboard, 20 frets, scale: 650mm, saddle width: 44mm, finish: natural high-gloss, incl. Lakewood Hiscox hardcase.

order code 161645
€ 1835.- £ 1514.-

Gibson J45 TV

Acoustic guitar

Round shoulder line, elegant body, red spruce top, back and sides mahogany, incl. vintage style case, finish: vintage sunburst.

order code 112649
€ 2190.- £ 1807.-

Maton EBG808A

Acoustic steel guitar

Orchestra model, solid AAA spruce top, back and sides solid australian blackwood, queensland maple neck, rosewood fretboard, scale 650mm, nut width: 44.1mm, herringbone rosette/top, Maton AP5 pickup system, incl. case. Finish: Natural Satin. Made in Australia.

order code 244174
€ 2599.- £ 2144.-

Guild F-512 D-Tar

Acoustic guitar

12-string, jumbo, solid AAA sitka spruce top, solid rosewood back and sides, 3-piece mahogany/walnut/mahogany neck, fretboard ebony, scale: 651mm, nut width: 46mm, 20 frets, D-Tar pickup system, custom Gotoh tuners, gold hardware, incl. case. Finish: Natural.

order code 254781
€ 2599.- £ 2144.-

Gibson SJ-200 STD

Acoustic guitar

Handmade, solid sitka spruce top, solid eastern curly maple back and sides, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, crown inlays, 20 frets, gold tuners, active electronics, sound hole mounted volume control, incl. case.

Vintage sunburst
order code 185825
€ 2950.- £ 2434.-
Antique natural
order code 232510
€ 3059.- £ 2524.-

Martin Guitars OMCPA1

Acoustic guitar

000-14, orchestra model, cutaway, solid sitka spruce top, back and sides solid rosewood, ovangkol binding, ebony fretboard, arrows and squares inlays, 20 frets, ebony bridge performing artist belly, gold tuners, Fishman F1 Aura pickup system with Martin Gold Plus pickup, incl. 370PA brown hardshell case. Finish: Natural.

order code 242162
€ 2950.- £ 2434.-

Martin Guitars Johnny Cash D-35

Acoustic guitar

Solid Engelmann spruce top, back and sides solid east indian rosewood, solid mahogany neck, solid black ebony bridge and fretboard, 20 frets (14 clear), star inlays, chrome Grover tuning machines, incl. hardshell case. Finish: Black Gloss.

order code 109309
€ 4333.- £ 3575.-

Flea Bass Junior

Short scale bass guitar

Solid alder body, bolt-on maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 20 frets, 1x volume and 1x tone control, adjustable bridge, chrome hardware, incl. gigbag.

Finish: Black
order code 229558
€ 192.- £ 158.-
Finish: Blue
order code 229559
€ 192.- £ 158.-
Finish: Green
order code 229560
€ 192.- £ 158.-
Finish: Orange
order code 229561
€ 192.- £ 158.-

Flea Bass Model 32

4-string bass guitar

Solid alder body, bolt-on maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 20 frets, 1x volume and 1x tone controls, adjustable bridge, chrome hardware, open gear elephant tuners, matching headstock, incl. gigbag.

Finish: Black
order code 229556
€ 192.- £ 158.-
Finish: Orange
order code 229555
€ 192.- £ 158.-

Flea Bass Street Bass

4-string bass guitar

Solid basswood body, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 20 frets, passive Alnico humbucker, open gear elephant ear tuners, string-thru-body bridge.

Finish: Silver
order code 255385
€ 192.- £ 158.-
Finish: White
order code 255386
€ 192.- £ 158.-
Finish: Blue
order code 255375
€ 192.- £ 158.-

Danelectro Dano 63 Shortscale

Bass guitar

Reissue model, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 2x ‚63 lipstick-style Alnico pickups, die cast tuners, pro hardware. Finish: Red Burst

order code 205015
€ 215.- £ 177.-

Danelectro Dano 63 Long Scale Bass

4-string bass guitar

Maple neck, 2x ‘63 Lipstick style Alnico pickups, rosewood fretboard, 24 frets, die cast machine heads, pro hardware. Finish: Red Burst.

order code 278637
€ 241.- £ 199.-

Höfner Ignition Beatles Bass

4-string bass guitar

Hollow maple body, spruce top, rosewood fretboard, 22 frets, 2x Höfner humbucking pickups, nickel hardware, rhythm/solo-switch, control plate with 2 volume controls.

Vintage Sunburst
order code 232784
€ 244.- £ 201.-
Black
order code 232783
€ 244.- £ 201.-
Vintage Sunb./lefthanded
order code 232785
€ 244.- £ 201.-

Danelectro Dead On 58 Longhorn Bass

Bass guitar

Upgraded reissue, masonite body, bolt-on maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 24 frets, scale: 755mm, rosewood bridge, souped-up lipstick pickups, 2x stacked volume and tone controls. Finish: Copper Burst.

order code 228497
€ 259.- £ 214.-

Fender American Std. P-Bass MN

4-string bass guitar

Alder body, maple neck, maple fretboard, 20 medium frets, scale: 864mm (34“), 1x American Precision P-Bass Alnico V-Split single-coil pickup, high-mass vintage modified bridge, incl. strap, cable and new SKB case. Finish: Olympic White.

order code 203604
€ 1245.- £ 1027.-

Gibson Explorer Bass LTD

4-string bass guitar

Limited hit and run 2011, Explorer style, mahogany body, maple neck, preciosa fretboard, 22 frets, long scale: 864mm, Grover tuners, 3-point adjustable saddles, 2 Thunderbird ceramic pickups, 2x volume and 1x tone control, incl. case. Finish: Silverburst.

order code 273252
€ 1259.- £ 1039.-

Fender FSR Precision Bass

4-string bass guitar

Ash body, maple neck, maple fretboard, 20 frets, single split-coil pickup, black pickguard, chrome hardware, incl. SKB case. Finish: Mahogany Stain.

order code 278890
€ 1299.- £ 1072.-

Sandberg Panther TT4 RW Mac

4-string bass guitar

Mahogany body, macassar top, bolt-on maple neck, rosewood fretboard with pearloid block inlays, long scale, 22 frets, 2x Sandberg single-coil pickups (Alnico5 magnets), Sandberg 2-band EQ, active/passive switch, incl. gigbag. Finish: Natural Satin.

order code 262617
€ 1690.- £ 1394.-

Music Man Stingray 5

5-string bass guitar

Ash body, maple neck, rosewood fretboard, 3-band active EQ, 22 frets, chrome hardware, black pickguard, includes case. Finish: Black

order code 185211
€ 1935.- £ 1596.-

Fender Marcus Miller Jazz Bass V

5 string bass guitar

Signature model, ash body, maple neck, Hipshot® Ultralite tuning machines, 20 medium jumbo frets, 2x custom vintage-style 5-string Jazz Bass single coils, 2-way mini toggle switch for active/passive mode, chrome deluxe steel bridge with nickel plated brass saddles, chrome hardware, incl. case. Finish: Aged Natural

order code 160935
€ 2444.- £ 2016.-

Sadowsky MV4-WL Will Lee

4-string bass guitar

Ash body, maple neck, maple fretboard, 22 frets, chrome hardware, D'tuner, Sadowsky J-style pickups, Sadowsky preamp with vintage tone control and midboost, incl. case, finish: black.

order code 257554
€ 2790.- £ 2302.-

Parker MaxxFly Bass PB12

4-string bass guitar

Fretless, swamp ash body, poplar neck, carbon glass epoxy fretboard with stainless steel frets, EMG active P-Bass neck pickup, EMG active MM-Bass bridge pickup, Parker designed Hipshot tailpiece, Graph Tech ghost piezo saddles, Acoustiphonic modular pre-amp, Hipshot ultra light tuners, black hardware, incl. gigbag. Finish: Candy Lemon Yellow.

order code 280684
€ 3555.- £ 2933.-

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128237	009 - 042	£ 2.55
148111	009 - 046	£ 2.38
128238	010 - 046	£ 2.55
132702	011 - 048	£ 2.76

Harley Benton
with extra E1 and B2 strings

156199	009 - 042	£ 2.75
156200	010 - 046	£ 2.75

GHS Boomers

104584	009 - 042	£ 3.88
104585	010 - 046	£ 3.88
158969	011 - 050	£ 3.51
181291	012 - 052	£ 3.88

Dean Markley

104563	2502B 009 - 042	£ 3.14
104562	2508 009 - 046	£ 3.14
104565	2503B 010 - 046	£ 3.14
104564	2504B 010 - 052	£ 3.14

D´Addario EXL

104554	120 009 - 042	£ 3.66
101428	125 009 - 046	£ 3.54
104555	110 010 - 046	£ 3.66
131962	140 010 - 052	£ 4.12

Ernie Ball

104572	2223 009 - 042	£ 4.37
104570	2222 009 - 046	£ 4.37
104573	2221 010 - 046	£ 4.37

Elixir Nanoweb

152173	009 - 042	£ 9.10
152174	009 - 046	£ 9.10
152175	010 - 046	£ 8.70
152177	011 - 049	£ 8.90

Electric bass strings

156186	Warwick Red Label 040 - 100	£ 8.20
144460	Warwick Red Label 045 - 105	£ 8.20
147931	Warwick Red Label 040 - 130	£ 9.80
157147	Warwick Red Label 045 - 135	£ 11.10
140180	GHS 3045 M 045 - 105	£ 15.10
160651	GHS 3045 5M-DYB 045 - 130	£ 18.20
104535	Rotosound 045 - 105	£ 16.40
142786	Rotosound 045 - 130	£ 22.-
122057	Ernie Ball 045 - 100	£ 19.70
141174	Ernie Ball 045 - 105	£ 19.70
121135	Ernie Ball 045 - 130	£ 24.-
152178	Elixir Nanoweb 040 - 095	£ 35.-
171440	Elixir Nanoweb 045 - 100	£ 35.-
152179	Elixir Nanoweb 045 - 105	£ 35.-

GUITAR CARE

Thomann string winder
For faster string winding

order code 122787 £ 1.19

Harley Benton Guitar Care
Guitar cleaner, 100ml, even for nitro lacquers

order code 196948 £ 3.05

Dunlop Formula 65 Polish
Polish & cleaner for guitar and bass.

order code 141577 £ 3.94

D'Andrea Lemon Oil
Cleaning oil, fretboard conditioner for guitar and bass

order code 150545 £ 3.11

GHS Fast Fret
Fingerboard, string and neck cleaner, silicone free.

order code 104761 £ 3.96

Lead Foot SB201
A/B switch for guitar and bass

order code 134241 £ 15.10

GIGBAG & CASE

Thomann Economy
Standard model, large pocket for accessories, notes and strings, colour: black

145669	Classic	£ 7.80
178496	Western	£ 7.80
133671	Electric guitar	£ 7.80
142774	Electric bass	£ 7.80

Thomann Standard
20mm padding, bottom protector, black velvet lining, backbag straps.

121546	Classic	£ 14.30
130405	3/4 Classic	£ 14.30
121547	Western	£ 14.30
121548	Electric guitar	£ 14.30
157096	Flying V	£ 14.30
121549	Electric bass	£ 14.30
142783	Jumbo	£ 23.-
121814	Acoustic bass	£ 24.-

Thomann Deluxe Profi

Gig bags with 30mm padding, 5cm wide padded straps, foldable backbag straps, 2 outside pockets, 2 additional accessory pockets.

142777	Electric guitar	£ 18.90
142775	Classic	£ 18.90
142776	Western	£ 18.90
142778	Electric bass	£ 18.90

Fender Frontman 15R
Electric guitar combo

15W, 1x 8" special design speaker, dual selectable channels, volume, gain, drive, 3 band EQ, headphone output. Dimensions: 31.8 x 33.6 x 18.4cm (HxWxD). Weight: 6.8kg

order code 155460 € 69.- £ 57.-

Blackheart Little Giant BH5H
5W all-valve guitar combo

Class A, EL84/6BQ6 power amp valve, 12AX7/ ECC83 preamp valve, 1x 12" Blackheart 1216A by Eminence speaker, solid state rectifer. Controls: volume, bass, mid and treble, pentode/ triode switch. Dimensions: 47.3 x 46 x 28cm. Weight: 17.5kg

order code 203720 € 189.- £ 156.-

Fender FM212R
Guitar combo

Frontman series, 100W, 2x 12" speakers, 3 channels (normal, drive and extra drive), FX loop, includes 2-way footswitch. Dimensions: 49.5 x 68.5 x 27cm. Weight: 21.7kg

order code 167017 € 199.- £ 164.-

Bugera V22
All valve combo

22W, 12" speaker, 2 channels, 3x 12AX7 preamp valves, 2x EL 84 power amp valves, clean, gain and volume control, 3-band EQ, 1x master control, 1x presence control, built-in digital reverb (adjustable), normal and bright input, impedance switchable between 4, 8 and 16Ω, triode and pentode mode, 2x external speaker outputs, footswitch input, effect loop, incl. footswitch.

order code 252074 € 255.- £ 210.-

Bugera 6260-212
All valve guitar combo

120W, 2 channels, 2x 12" Bugera speaker, 4x 6L6 power valves (convertible to EL34), 5x 12AX7 preamp valves, reverb and presence control for each channel, impedance switch (4/8/16Ω), includes footswitch for channel and reverb. Dimensions: 51.9 x 68.8 x 24.8cm. Weight: 28.5kg.

order code 206768 € 285.- £ 235.-

Blackheart BH15-112 Handsome Devil
15W all-tube guitar combo

Switchable from 15W pentode to 7W triode, 1x 12" Eminence speaker, 4/8/16Ω speaker outputs, solid state rectifer, controls for drive, level, treble, mid, bass and presence, dimensions HWD: 47,3 x 46 x 28cm, weight: 21,5kg.

order code 204845 € 288.- £ 238.-

Yamaha THR10
Universal guitar combo w/ USB interface

For electric guitar, acoustic guitar or bass guitars, 5 amp simulations, bass and acoustic simulation, 3-band EQ, 5 user memories, chromatic tuner, headphone out, aux in, USB to use as interface, 2x 8cm fullrange speaker, 2x 5W, incl. power supply, USB cable, cable and Cubase AI, dimensions WHD: 36 x 18.4 x 14cm, weight: 2.8kg.

order code 271803 € 295.- £ 243.-

VHT Special-12/20 Combo
Guitar combo

1 channel, 1x12" VHT chrome back speaker, 12W RMS with 6V6 or EL84 tubes (with VHT adaptor) or 20W with 6L6 or EL34, with cathode biased push/pull output stage, controls for volume, tone, effects send & return, depth, texture, watts, pentode/triode, line out, 2x speaker out, dimensions HWD: 45 x 49.5 x 27cm, weight: 18,5kg, incl. footswitch.

order code 269112 € 388.- £ 320.-

Bugera 333-212 Infinium
Full valve guitar combo

120W, 3 channels, 2x12" Bugera speakers, 4x 6L6 poweramp valves, 4x 12AX7 preamp valves, 3-band EQ, poweramp damping, FX loop, integrated reverb, incl. foot switch. Valves no longer need to be matched in pairs, different types of valves can be combined in the preamp stage of any valve amplfier.

order code 269562 € 469.- £ 387.-

Fender Blues Deluxe Reissue
Guitar Combo

40W, 1x 12" custom esigned Eminence 8Ω speaker, 2 channels, reverb, FX loop, includes footswitch. Dimensions: 59.7 x 47.6 x 26.7cm. Weight: 20.4kg Finish: Tweed

order code 180643 € 819.- £ 676.-

Blackheart BH1H Killer Ant Head
1W all tube guitar head

Single ended, Class A, 4/8/16Ω speaker outputs, solid state rectifer, volume control, dimensions: 32.5 x 25.5 x 26.5cm, weight: 5.5kg.

o. code 204842 € 95.- £ 78.-

Blackheart Killer Ant Head BH1H Bundle
Bundle incl. Killer Cab BH110 1x10" cabinet and speaker cable.

order code 281033 € 191.- £ 158.-

Blackheart Little Giant BH5H
5W all-valve guitar head

Class A, EL84/6BQ6 power valve, 12AX7/ECC83 preamp valve, 4/8/16Ω speaker outs, solid state rectifier. Controls: volume, bass, mid and treble, pentode/triode switch. Dimensions: 24.3 x 38.1x 22.8cm (HxWxD). Weight: 9.5kg

order code 203717 € 125.- £ 103.-

Bugera 333XL Infinium
All-tube guitar head

120W, 3 channels, 4x EL34 poweramp valves, 4x 12AX7 preamp valves, 3-band EQ for each channel, FX loop, presence control, adjustable noise gate for lead channel, XL switch for more low end, internal reverb, switchable impedance 4, 8 and 16Ω, adjustable line out, valves no longer need to be matched in pairs, incl. footswitch.

order code 268877 € 468.- £ 386.-

Bogner Alchemist HD
All-tube guitar head

40W, class AB preamp, 20W switchable, 5x 12AX7 preamp valves, 2x 6L6 power amp valves, 2 channels (channel 1: direct acting, clean but also adequate for blues sounds, filigree treble, pumping bass - channel 2: characteristic Bogner sound, creamy, modern, long sustain), reverb and delay effect models, incl. footswitch.

order code 204356 € 469.- £ 387.-

Kemper Profiling Amplifier
Guitar preamp

Allows you to take a precise sound snapshot of an existing amplifier setup including speaker cabinet and microphones, multiple stomp effect emulations (up to 4 simultaneously), master effects, EQ, and more, it is now possible for the first time to take a precise snapshot of your own amplifier sound.

order code 264341 € 1399.- £ 1154.-

Fryette Sig:X Head
Guitar head

Full valve (1x 12AX7, 5x 12AX7A, 2x KT88, 1x 5U4G), 100W or 40W, 3-band EQ, Fryette Gain I/ Gain II voicing and overdrive, pre-EQ voicing on each channel, more/less mode, boost switch, gain stacking, power shift, FX I/O (switchable serial/parallel), 2x speaker outs (4/8/16Ω mono/ stereo), incl. 5-button footswitch, dimensions WHD: 74.3 x 22.8 x 26.7cm, weight: 20kg.

order code 228483 € 1689.- £ 1393.-

Gallien Krueger Backline 115 II
Bass combo

175W, 1x 15" speaker, 4-band EQ, 10dB pad, mute switch, gain & level controls, contour control, line output, headphone output

order code 156650 € 249.- £ 205.-

Ashdown T15-250S
Bass combo

Thomann Special Edition, 1x 15" speaker, 250W, hi/low input. Controls: bass, lo mid, middle, hi mid, treble, deep and bright. FX loop, DI out, tuner out.

order code 227816 € 285.- £ 235.-

Line6 LowDown LD400 Pro
400W bass combo

400W, 2x 10" speaker + horn, 5 amp models, 5 bass effects, 4 programmable channel memories (36 with FBV shortboard), front panel tuner, output for external speaker, balanced XLR DI output, headphone output, 1/8" CD/MP3 input, jack for FBV Express or FBV shortboard, weight: 41kg.

order code 207508 € 288.- £ 238.-

Ampeg BA300/210
300W hybrid bass combo

2x10" speaker, HF horn with level control, 12AX7 preamp tube, 3-band EQ, mid control style, ultra high/low switches, built-in compressor, pre/post switch and ground lift, removable casters, dimensions WHD: 53.98 x 54.61 x 40.64.cm, weight: 25.kg.

order code 206084 € 522.- £ 431.-

Ibanez P5110 Promethean
Bass combo

1x 10" speaker, 500W @ 4Ω, 250W @ 8Ω, mute switch, gain low/high control, 6-band equalizer, vibe control, built-in limiter, tilt-up system. Dimensions: 36 x 32.6 x 33.2cm (HxWxD). Weight: 12.5kg.

order code 227720 € 611.- £ 504.-

Ampeg BA600/210
600W hybrid bass combo

2x 12AX7 valve preamp, 600W, 2x 10" neodymium speakers, HF horn with level control, channel switching (vintage B15/ modern), 3-band EQ, ultra hi/lo switches, integrated compressor, line out, tube-driven balanced XLR and unbalanced 1/4" out with level control, pre/post EQ switch and ground lift, FX loop. Dimensions: 66 x 69 x 43cm. Weight: 27.5kg.

order code 202312 € 619.- £ 511.-

Ampeg B-115E
Bass cabinet

1x15" speaker, 200W RMS @ 8Ω, frequency response: 50Hz - 3kHz, dimensions (WxHxD): 58 x 58 x 44,5cm, weight: 32,5kg.

order code 111425 € 269.- £ 222.-

Ampeg B-410HE
Bass cabinet

4x 10" speakers, 1" horn driver, 200W RMS @ 8Ω, 55Hz-8kHz. Dimensions: 58 x 58 x 44.5cm (WxHxD). Weight: 32.5kg.

order code 111424 € 333.- £ 275.-

Ampeg B-410HLF
4x10", 1" horn driver, 400W, 50Hz - 18kHz, 58 x 65.5 x 44.5cm, 40kg.

order code 111423 € 425.- £ 351.-

Line6 LowDown HD400
400W bass head

5 amp models, 5 bass effects, 4 programmable channel memories (36 with FBV shortboard), front panel tuner, 2 speakon outs for external speaker, balanced XLR DI out, 1/4" preamp out, jack for optional FBV Express or Shortboard.

order code 207509 € 189.- £ 156.-

Ashdown Little Giant 1000
Bass head

2x 500W @ 4Ω, 2x 330W @ 8Ω, 4-band semi-parametric EQ, deep switch, shape switch, pre/post DI out, frequency range: -3dB@25Hz and 25kHz, swichtable active/passive input, includes rackmount. Dimensions: 6.6 x 21 x 31cm (HxWxD). Weight: 3.5kg.

order code 211375 € 249.- £ 205.-

Traynor DB300H
Bass head

350W @ 4Ω, 4-band EQ with scoop control, DI out (XLR), pre/post EQ switchable, active/ passive in, frequency response: 20Hz - 20kHz, groundlift, limiter, effect send/return, 2x headphone out, dimensions HWD: 38,1 x 9,5 x 31,75cm, weight: 5,9kg. Made in North America.

order code 247483 € 385.- £ 318.-

Ampeg SVT-7 Pro
Bass head

1000W RMS @ 4Ω, 600W RMS @ 8Ω, 1x JJ 12AX7 preamp valve, Class D power amp, bass, mid, treble, mid-tone control, ultra low/high boosts, compressor, balanced DI out, preamp out, poweramp in, pre/post EQ switch, 0/-40dB, groundlift, aux in, effects loop, tuner out, 2 Speakon outs, power supply, incl. rackmount, weight: 7kg.

order code 242519 € 739.- £ 610.-

www.thomann.de
Telephone Hotline: 0203 5141643 (UK)
Fax: +49 9546 9223-24

The Thomann services

- 30-day money back guarantee
- free shipping to the UK and Ireland on orders above £159

Sennheiser Freeport Instrument

Diversity UHF wireless system

4 switchable frequencies between 863 - 865MHz, 10mW HF power, diversity receiver with LED for HF, diversity, peak, XLR & jack out, guitar bodypack with 1x 9V battery (up to 10hr). Includes 12V power supply and guitar cable.

order code 183507 € 155.- £ 128.-

Shure PG14E T10

UHF guitar/bass wireless system

PG1 handheld transmitter, 10 frequencies switchable (4 parallel), T10 frequency range (854-865MHz), pilot tone, mic/line switchable, 10mW HF power, 9.5" diversity receiver with internal antennas, audio and ready LEDs on receiver, channel display, XLR/jack out, powered via 9V battery. Includes WA302 guitar cable and power supply.

order code 109421 € 188.- £ 155.-

Line 6 Relay G50

Guitar & bass guitar wireless system

2.4GHz, 12 switchable frequencies, frequency response: 10Hz - 20kHz, 120dB max. SPL, up to 60m working distance, jack I/O, battery powered up to 8h, LED signal for status and battery health, switchable EQ presets to simulate different guitar cables, small and trendy housing, incl. batteries, cable and manual.

o. code 241990 € 444.- £ 366.-

Line 6 Relay G90 19" True Diversity Receiver, 2 outs for amp/tuner.

order code 241999 € 635.- £ 524.-

Sennheiser EW172 G3 / 1G8

1,8GHz wireless system with bodypack

Bodypack, 9,5" receiver, 20 banks with up to 12 compatible frequencies + 1 bank with writeable frequencies, 25Hz - 18kHz, pilot tone, auto tune, HDX-compander, frequency response 1G8 (1785 - 1800MHz), LCD display with with NF and channel, 10mW power, 2 BNC antenna connections, incl. power supply and 2 AA batteries.

order code 264259 € 645.- £ 532.-

Danelectro Qwiktune QT 11

Tuner for guitar and bass

Built-in electronic tuning pipe, plays E, A, D, G, h and e trough built-in speaker, 3 LEDs, built-in microphone, LC-display, powered by batteries (incl. 2x AAA).

order code 142801 € 7.60 £ 6.30

Danelectro Qwiktune QT 12

Chromatic tuner, electronic tuning pipe, 12 reference tones.

order code 147028 € 9.50 £ 7.80

Korg Pitchblack

Chromatic floor pedal tuner

LED display, 100% true bypass out, 4 display modes (full strobe, half strobe, meter & mirror), detection range from E0 to C8 (20,60Hz - 4186Hz), adjustable calibration (436 - 445Hz), 9V DC output jack for cascading the power supply to other pedals, black aluminium die-cast body, optional power supply available.

order code 207261 € 55.- £ 45.-

tc electronic PolyTune mini

Polyphonic stompbox tuner

Reference pitch: 440Hz, tuning range: 27.5Hz - 4186Hz, ±0.5 cent tuning accuracy, true bypass, super-bright LED display, Drop-D and capo tuning, up to 5 semitones flat tunings, dimensions WDH: 5.1 x 9.3 x 4.5cm, weight: 160g.

o. code 274540 € 77.- £ 64.-

Boss TU-3

Chromatic floor tuner

Cent mode (like classical tuner) or stream mode, Accu Pitch, high brightness mode, flat tunings, mute or bypass, C0 (16,35Hz) - C8 (4.186Hz), also for 7-string guitars and 6-string basses, ±1 Cent, calibration 436 - 445 Hz, powered by 9V battery (included) or optional power supply, power for up to 7 additional FX pedals. Dimensions: 7.3 x 5.9 x 12.9cm. Weight: 390g.

order code 238909 € 88.- £ 73.-

Harley Benton PowerPlant Junior

Compact multi power supply unit

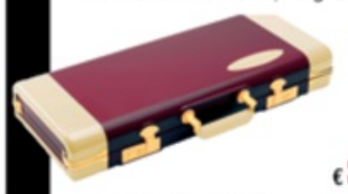
Power supply for FX pedals, 5x isolated 9V DC outputs delivering 120mA each, incl. cable set (5x 60cm, 5x 30cm, 1x Y, 1x daisy chain 100cm).

order code 264101 € 28.- £ 23.-

Danelectro Pedalboard

Pedalboard

Original case for 5 Danelectro Cool Cat effects, incl. power supply and all cables, dimensions WDH: 52.5 x 22 x 8cm, weight: 2.2kg.



order code 209216 € 38.- £ 31.-

Behringer FCB1010

MIDI foot controller with MIDI merge

10 banks with 10 presets each, special presets for Behringer amps, 2 expression pedals, simultaneous transmission of 5 MIDI program changes and 2 MIDI controllers per preset, MIDI note-on commands for trigger & tap tempo applications, 2 program relay control switch jack outputs (e.g. to select channels on any guitar amp), built-in power supply. Weight: 3.5kg

order code 149820 € 109.- £ 90.-

Harley Benton PB1000

Pedal board

For floor effects with aluminum case, velcro mounting area, incl. velcro tape and mounting material for optional power supply under the board, metal handle, chrome corners, dimensions: 60 x 40 x 11cm, weight (without case): 4,6kg.

order code 258092 € 122.- £ 101.-

Boss DD-7

Digital delay

6.4sec delay time, 40sec loop function, modulation echo with chorus, modeling of the classic DM-2, tap tempo via optional footswitch or continuous adjustment via optional expression pedal, stereo in/out, power supply optional.

order code 207482 € 138.- £ 114.-

tc electronic Flashback

Delay/looper stompbox

Mono/stereo I/O, delay, feedback and FX-level control, 10 different delay settings, audio tapping, USB connection for exchanging TonePrint settings and software updates, true bypass, power supply or battery (both not included).

order code 259463 € 145.- £ 120.-

Boss ME-25 Bundle

Guitar FX pedal

24bit, 60 presets, OD/DS solo function, easy edit function, 5 real time controller, ME-25 DVD-ROM, to use with included 6 AA batteries or optional power supply, weight: 1,9kg, dimensions WDH: 30 x 19,1 x 7,2cm. **Bundle incl. the sssnake GKP6 cable.**

order code 253474 € 155.- £ 128.-

Voodoo Lab Pedal Power 2 Plus

Universal power supply

For all battery operated guitar pedals, 4x 9/12V/100mA, 2x 9V/250mA, 2x 9V/100mA or combination of several outputs for 18V or 24V, each output is complete isolated & short circuit protected, regulated and highly filtered, incl. cables and detachable AC power cable.

order code 205981 € 159.- £ 131.-

Zoom G3

FX unit & guitar audio interface

3 big LCD displays and footswitches, authentic modeling for amps, cabinets and microphones, more than 100 DSP effects, up to 100 presets, drum computer, tuner, looper function with 40 sec. phrase recording and overdubbing, USB audio interface (USB powered and compliant to Mac and PC), incl. edit & share, Sequel LE and power supply.

order code 263002 € 169.- £ 139.-

Boss RC-3

Loop station

Massive internal memory with up to three hours of stereo recording time, 99 on-board memories for storing loops, USB 2.0 port allows you to connect to a PC and import/export WAV audio, rhythm guide with real drums, runs on a single 9V battery (included) or optional AC power supply (order code 108096).

order code 259315 € 198.- £ 163.-

Digitech JamMan Stereo

Looper / phrase sampler

Store over 35 minutes of mono, CD quality loops in 99 internal memories, SD card slot, 44.1kHz sample rate, USB port, record rhythm loops and solo over them on the fly, completely hands-free, aux in, reverse playback, 4 heavy-duty metal footswitches, 3 stop modes, balanced XLR mic in, metronome, automatic recording, includes power supply.

o. code 243160 € 244.- £ 201.-

Vox ToneLab EX

Guitar preamp

Original Vox ValveReactor™ with 12AX7 valve, 200 professional created programs, 100 user programs, 100 factory presets, incl. 50 song presets, 33 amp models, 11 cabinet models, 45 premium effects, 11 distortion pedals, 15 floorpedal effects, 11 modulation effects, 4 delay effect types, 3 reverb types, 1 noise reduction, dimensions: WHD: 39,4 x 23,8 x 7,2cm, weight: 3kg, incl. power supply.

order code 257611 € 266.- £ 219.-

Boss ME-70

Multi FX pedal & preamp

Manual mode, memory mode, 18 banks of 4 patches, preamp with 6 amp models, 4 effect groups with on/off footswitch, 40sec looper, expression pedal with 6 functions, reverb, noise supressor, tuner, aux in, powered via battery or optional 9V power supply.

order code 222795 € 277.- £ 229.-

Boss JS-8 eBand

Audio interface, preamp und recorder

39 amp models for guitar and bass, audio player with 4000 songs, mic input with 4 modeling effects, 300 audio loop phrases on-board for backing tracks and rhythms, 40 sec. looper with overdubs, 24bit/44,1kHz, incl. power supply, SD card, dimensions WDH: 26,4 x 16,6 x 20,1cm, weight: 1,7kg.

order code 235701 € 318.- £ 262.-

Boss RC-30 PowerSet

Dual track looper

Twin pedal multitrack looper with true stereo I/O, 2 synchronized stereo tracks, massive internal memory with up to three hours of stereo recording time, 99 on-board memory phrases for storing loops, built-in effects for processing loops, USB 2.0, rhythm guide with real drums, runs on batteries or optional AC power supply. **Bundle incl. Boss (Roland) PSA 230S power supply.**

order code 259329 € 325.- £ 268.-

Boss GT-10 bundle

Guitar FX processor and preamp

400 presets (200 factory, 200 user), 13 simultaneous FX blocks, 2 WSP chips, SB Audio MIDI interface, 2 freely assignable control footswitches, amp switch connector, FX loop, Boss 40sec looper. Dimensions: 54.2 x 27.2 x 7.7cm (WxDxH). Weight: 4.7kg. **Bundle includes Thomann FX pedal bag.**

order code 210357 € 388.- £ 320.-

Line6 POD HD500 Bundle

Guitar FX

16 amp, 16 cabinet and 100 effect models, 48sec. looper, pitch shifter, effects pre/post switchable, effect loop, aux in, XLR mic in, CD/MP3 in, Variax and USB (10 audio channels), headphone out, 128 user programs and 512 factory presets, MIDI in/out/thru, dimensions WHD: 55 x 8 x 27cm. **Bundle incl. Thomann gigbag.**

order code 254915 € 489.- £ 403.-

Boss RC-300

Loop station

3 stereo tracks each with 2 separate foot switches, volume fader for each track, expression pedal for effect control in real time, 3 hours stereo recording time and 99 internal user presets, 16 optimized effects, XLR mic in with phantom power, USB connection for import & export of WAV data files, dimensions WxDxH: 53.6 x 23.1 x 7.6cm, weight: 3.9kg, incl. power supply.

order code 270951 € 518.- £ 427.-

Avid Eleven Rack + Pro Tools 10

Guitar recording and effect system

True-Z auto-impedance guitar input, classic amp and stompbox sounds, effects processors in studio-quality, convolution based microphone emulations, integrated FX-loop, Tuner, tempo tap, USB 2.0, supports up to 8 simultaneous channels of high-resolution recording (up to 24bit/96kHz), AES/EBU and S/PDIF digital I/O, MIDI I/O, incl. ProTools 10 (download version) and iLok.

order code 272823 € 744.- £ 614.-

Roland GR-55GK Blue

Guitar synth + modeling

910 editable Roland synthesizer sounds, complete modeling-soundchain (guitar/bass/synth/effects/amps) out of VG-99 incl. virtual tuning, 2 synth sounds and the modeling sound can be combined, 270 preset sounds, 297 storage spaces, 20-second looper, USB interface for audio and MIDI, incl. power supply, GK-3 pickup and 5m GK cable, weight: 3.3kg.

order code 259311 € 745.- £ 615.-

PICKS

Dunlop
Nylon picks
149397 Thin
149398 Medium
149399 Heavy £ 0.32

Harley Benton
Professional perloid picks
149393 Thin
149394 Medium
149395 Heavy
149396 Extra Heavy £ 0.20

Pick Holder
Plastic pick holder, up to 5 picks, can be mounted to a mic stand.
order code 121815 £ 3.94

Dunlop Pick Holder
with double-sided tape
order code 133206 £ 1.53

Wedgie Pick Holder
for head stock, can be clipped between 2 strings, for 2 picks
order code 162773 £ 1.57

ACCESSORIES

the sssnake cables

128549	IPP1030, 3m	£ 1.98
128550	IPP1060, 6m	£ 2.76
157995	GPK3, 3m	£ 3.96
157996	GPK6, 6m	£ 5.40
158874	GPK9, 9m	£ 7.10
166775	textile coated cable, 6m	£ 6.30
163864	WPP1060, 4m, helix cable	£ 5.40

Cordial cables

104967	Cordial CTI3PP, 3m	£ 8.70
104968	Cordial CTI6PP, 6m	£ 10.60
104969	Cordial CTI9PP, 9m	£ 12.60

Harley Benton GT1
Electronic tuning tone, with a push of a button all 6 guitar notes (E, A, D, G, H, E) via built-in speaker, practical key ring format
order code 159508 £ 2.29

Thomann CTK-10
Chromatic tuner as keyring, tuning by built-in microphone, pitch range: 440 Hz, detection accuracy: +-0,5 cent, incl. battery
order code 228420 £ 3.11

Thomann power supply

9V DC, 300mA, for Ibanez, Boss or Behringer floor effects.
order code 108096 £ 7.80

Pickups

122806	Seymour Duncan SH-4 black	£ 64.-
180924	Seymour Duncan SSH-JB	£ 103.-
242760	Seymour Duncan SAPH-2S	£ 153.-
121456	EMG 81 BK	£ 59.-
152101	EMG 85 BK	£ 64.-
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154102	EMG Zakk Wylde Pro	£ 119.-
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133444	12AX7 WA	£ 7.80
133445	12AX7 EH	£ 9.60

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101824	202, Regular wall, medium	£ 3.18
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125351	213, Heavy wall, large	£ 4.70

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HAGSTROM

Elfdalia 49Eldren & 49Elgracen Acoustics

Hagstrom's modern-day electrics combine cool looks with keen prices. But can they score in the acoustic and electro field too? Review by **Jerry Uwins**

Prior to ceasing production in 1983 and after its rebirth in 2004, Swedish manufacturer Hagstrom has been best known for its electrics, not least the Super Swede solidbody and Viking semi. Now, though, the company has added various series of Chinese-sourced acoustics, all named after areas or landmarks in Sweden. The Elfdalia series are one such, comprising a dreadnought and grand auditorium in acoustic and cutaway electro versions.

49ELDREN

Moving swiftly on from the rather ponderous cataloguing nomenclature, this dreadnought employs, like all Elfdalias, a solid cedar top with laminated mahogany back and sides, finished in a smart gloss livery save for the neck which is satin. Our sample's top is a particularly fine-looking example: close, even and cleanly grained and warmly hued.

Cosmetic trim is common to all models, and Hagstrom is tastefully unstinting in the decorations. Especially attractive is the marquetry-style rosette with inlays of what look like mahogany and maple. Maple is also used for binding the body and neck, while the top carries multi-ply black/white purfling. The oblong position markers are done in pearl and abalone; the instrument's pinnacle – literally – is Hagstrom's distinctive asymmetric-crowned headstock, with pearl logo and motif and toting gold diecast tuners whose stepped buttons are reminiscent of those on Grover Super Rotomatics. Their deluxe look is unarguable, though they're perhaps rather finely geared for quick tweaks. ➔

The Hagstroms come with ResinatorWood bridges and fingerboards

The ornate headstock and stepped tuners add a touch of art deco flash

This is a punchy, dynamic dreadnought. The tone is bright and attacking but the cedar adds warmth and low-end thump

FINAL SCORE

ELFDALIA 49ELDREN	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**18**/20
Value for money	**18**/20
Vibe	**18**/20
TOTAL	**90%**

FACTFILE

Elfdalia 49Eldren

DESCRIPTION **Dreadnought acoustic. Made in China**
PRICE **£309**

BUILD **Solid cedar top, laminated mahogany back and sides. Mahogany neck with 20-fret maple-bound ResinatorWood fingerboard. ResinatorWood bridge, Nubone nut and saddle, gold diecast tuners, bottom strap button**

OPTIONS **49Eldrecen cutaway electro (£403) with B-Band T35 system**
LEFT-HANDERS **No**
FINISH **Gloss natural body, satin neck**
SCALE LENGTH
650mm/25.6"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 43.5mm
12th fret 55mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 20.5mm
Ninth fret 23mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 35mm
Bridge 54mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 1.6mm
12th fret bass 2.2mm
FINGERBOARD RADIUS **15"**

Like this? Try these...

Crafter
D7-N
Solid cedar/mahogany dread includes wood-mosaic rosette and abalone neck markers
RRP **£249**

Lag Tramontane
T100D
Similarly timbered and featuring graphite nut and saddle, wood body binding and art nouveau-style rosette
RRP **£309**

FACTFILE
Elfdalia 49Elgracen

DESCRIPTION **Cutaway grand auditorium electro-acoustic. Made in China**

PRICE **£403**

BUILD **As dreadnought plus undersaddle pickup and B-Band T35 preamp with Volume, Bass, Middle, Treble, Phase, auto-chromatic tuner, battery status LED and separate quick-release battery holder**

OPTIONS: **49Elgran non-cutaway acoustic (£309)**
LEFT-HANDERS: **No**
FINISH: **Gloss natural body, satin neck**

SCALE LENGTH
650mm/25.6"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 43.5mm
12th fret 53mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 20mm
Ninth fret 22mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 35mm
Bridge 54mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 1.7mm
12th fret bass 2.0mm
MAX RIM DEPTH **118mm**
MAX BODY WIDTH **405mm**
FINGERBOARD RADIUS **16"**
WEIGHT **1.91kg/4.2lb**

CONTACT **Rosetti**
01376 550033
www.rosetti.co.uk

Like this? Try these...

Tanglewood
TW145SC
Solid cedar/mahogany 'Super Folk' has maple/herringbone top binding and B-Band A3T system
RRP **£399**

Crafter
GAE15-N
Solid cedar/dao, with wood soundhole inlay, snowdrop neck markers and Baggs Element pickup with LR-T RX preamp
RRP **£419**

Vintage
V120ON
Florentine-cutaway GA in all-solid spruce/mahogany. Features abalone rosette, wood bindings and Fishman Presys Blend
RRP **£449**

NOTE **All preamps include tuner**

The backs and sides on both these guitars are laminated mahogany

The B-Band T35, an economy version of the A3T preamp, is sold to various guitar brands

This grand auditorium sounds like the dread but has an airier, lighter texture. The preamp is a pleasure to work with

You might expect either rosewood or ebony for the fingerboard and bridge but, rather like Martin sometimes uses the synthetic Richlite, so Hagstrom has its own alternative approach: ResinatorWood. As the name suggests, this is a wood/resin composite, resembling ebony in colour and claimed to help eliminate wolf tones and hot spots. Judging by the bridge, the material is formed of thin horizontal layers, though the exact details are kept under wraps. Whatever, it certainly lends a nice smooth feel to the fingerboard. The 650mm-scale neck itself – three-piece mahogany including scarfed headstock – has a mainstream span and a reasonable 54mm string spacing at the bridge, and the profile is a shallow, evenly rounded 'C' that's a very easy player, helped by our sample's slick action. The fretting is generally well dressed, though the tops could do with more of a polish to eliminate a hint of bending friction.

SOUNDS
This is an agreeably punchy, dynamic dread. The tone is bright and fairly attacking, but underlying cedary warmth lends excellent poise as well as low-end thump, while a soupçon of forwardness – not harshness – in the mids helps contribute to enthusiastic projection. Notes and chords across the strings are cleanly defined at all positions and sustain rings out readily.

49ELGRACEN
At a tad under 16" across the lower bouts and with generous 118mm-deep rims, this Elfdalia sits squarely in grand auditorium territory. Its profiling isn't dissimilar to, say, Taylor's GA design, though the Hagstrom's Venetian cutaway is flatter in its turn towards the waist. Trim, hardware and materials – again including a good looking cedar front – are a reprise of the dreadnought's, the only real difference being on the neck. Span across the nut and bridge string spacing are the same, but the width further up is slimmed down a bit, as is the overall depth. Being an electro, these adjustments are good thinking, given that prospective owners may well be otherwise electric players. Suffice to say, the neck is a fast affair (and our sample's fret tops happen to be smoother too).

Powering comes via B-Band's T35 system, with a preamp which offers three-band EQ on rotaries, phase reverse and an efficient auto-chromatic tuner with a needle-style display. The knobs are rubberised for a sure grip, and the tuner handily mutes the system. Battery storage is in a quick-access housing on the lower rim.

SOUNDS
Understandably not so steroidal in the bass, the guitar's acoustic traits are otherwise similar to the dread's, just with an airier, slightly lighter texture. All good stuff, as are its powered capabilities. The T35's EQ is smoothly progressive and nicely judged without any silly extremes, gain is decent (if mostly happening towards max on the volume knob), and the inherent sound palette is impressively natural. In fact the system is a pleasure to work with.

VERDICT
The same goes for both these Hagstroms. Presentation is very smart with some luxury touches, the necks are fine players, and each guitar amply delivers the sonic goods. Rewarding, affordable buys all round, then.

FINAL SCORE

ELFDALIA 49ELGRACEN	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**18**/20
Value for money	**18**/20
Vibe	**18**/20
TOTAL	**90%**

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VINTAGE

VE8000PB-12 & VE8000PB

Paul Brett Signature Electros

Paul Brett has long been an advocate of early blues and the art and craft of the 12-string guitar. Now Vintage has produced a near-replica of one of his prewar favourites – plus a six-string version too. Review by **Jerry Uwins**

FACTFILE

Vintage VE8000PB-12

DESCRIPTION **Slot-head 12-string, 12-fret parlour electro. Made in China**
PRICE **£499 inc. case**

BUILD **Solid spruce top, laminated rosewood back and sides. Mahogany neck with 18-fret rosewood fingerboard. Rosewood bridge, Graphtec Tusq nut/saddle, gold amber-buttoned tuners, bottom strap button. Fishman undersaddle pickup; Acoustic Matrix VT endpin preamp with soundhole volume and tone**

OPTIONS **See VE8000PB**
LEFT-HANDERS **No**
FINISH **Satin natural**

SCALE LENGTH
649mm/25.5"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 47.5mm
12th fret 58mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 22.5mm
8th fret 23mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 40mm
Bridge 57.5mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 2.0mm
12th fret bass 2.4mm

Internationally acknowledged 12-string expert and maestro Paul Brett has teamed up with Vintage to produce a pair of signature parlour models. First in gestation was, not unnaturally, the 12-stringer, and brand owner John Hornby Skewes felt it would be a neat idea to partner this with a six-string adaptation. Both are electros, using Fishman's active, non-invasive Acoustic Matrix system with soundhole volume and tone wheels.

VE8000PB-12

This 14"-wide concert (OO-size) 12-string is based on Paul's 1920s Weymann, a Philadelphia-based manufacturer some of whose acoustics may or may not have been made under contract by Martin. The original has six of its strings retained at the bridge, the other six going through to a floating tailpiece, but for modern practicality the Vintage employs a conventional, if quite chunky, pin bridge. Cosmetic details differ, but one big similarity is attractive half-herringbone purfling around the solid spruce top and within the soundhole rosette. This decoration is repeated for the centre strip down the laminated rosewood back and across the endblock; the whole body is bound with maple. The guitar's satin finish is tidily applied: grain filled for smoothness along the mahogany neck, and unfilled on the body. This leaves grain pits here and there on the back and sides, but aesthetically that's somehow in keeping with the instrument's 'oldie' inspiration.

Thanks to the 12-frets-to-body configuration, the guitar is barely

12-fret configuration prevents the long headstock being too heavy

Solid rosewood back and sides and tasteful all-wood binding

FINAL SCORE

VINTAGE VE8000PB-12	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**19**/20
Value for money	**20**/20
Looks	**18**/20
TOTAL	**93%**

Like this? Try this...

Dave King
Louise 12
Vintage-style 12-fret slot-head in choice of all-solid woods. Priced for 12-string option, but allow extra for electro system
RRP **from £2095**

NOTE **For other 12-string parlour electros, try some British makers such as Atkin, Brook and Patrick James Eggle**

18+

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FACTFILE

Vintage VE8000PB

DESCRIPTION **Slot-head parlour electro-acoustic. Made in China**
PRICE **£449 inc. case**

BUILD **As VE8000PB-12 except six-string, 21 frets with 14 to body**

OPTIONS **See VE8000PB-12**
LEFT-HANDERS **No**
FINISH **Satin natural**

SCALE LENGTH
649mm/25.5"
NECK WIDTH
Nut 46mm
12th fret 56.5mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 22.5mm
9th fret 23mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 37.5mm
Bridge 55mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 1.9mm
12th fret bass 2.1mm
MAX RIM DEPTH **100mm**
MAX BODY WIDTH **357mm**
FINGERBOARD RADIUS **15"**
WEIGHT **1.84kg/4.05lb**

CONTACT **JHS**
0113 286 5381
www.jhs.co.uk

Like this? Try this...

Tanglewood
TGRP73-VSE
Solid spruce/rosewood slot-head 12-fretter in vintage sunburst. Includes maple/herringbone top binding and Fishman three-band Presys system
RRP **£439**

Takamine
EG630S-VV
Solid spruce/flame-maple slot-head 14-fretter in vintage violin burst. Carries three-band TP-4T system
RRP **£466**

Seagull
Coastline Grand Qi
Solid cedar/wild cherry in semi-gloss natural. Has 14-fret neck, conventional headstock and two-band Quantum I system
RRP **£610**

NOTE **All the preamps include tuner**

Fishman Matrix VT undersaddle pickup is linked to a MAT preamp with soundhole controls

The square-shaped bridge is rosewood, the saddle is Graphtec Tusq

The six-string Paul Brett is a persuasive picker, but the punchy, jangly 12-string is the unequivocal ace of the pair

neck heavy, the slot-head's six-on-a-strip tuners helping keep the weight down compared to diecast machines. The full-scale neck itself is pleasingly obliging for a 12, with a mainstream width and a fairly flat-backed profile that retains a pretty much constant medium depth all the way up. The fretting is very nicely dressed and polished, and our sample's medium-low action and surefooted intonation encourage forays well above the first position. The rosewood fingerboard's micro-dot markers are partnered by a kind of cattle-horn motif at the octave.

SOUNDS

Considering its modest size, the PB-12 delivers enjoyably punchy jangle, even more so in terms of low-end fullness if you detune, say a whole tone, something many 12 users do anyway. A spin-off benefit is less likelihood of snapping the top G! But whether at concert or tuned down, the guitar has – doubtless partly due to the bridge being positioned in the middle of the lower bouts (the 'sweet spot') – an agreeably supple acoustic warmth and willing sustain, and it capos well without the tone thinning out too much. The Fishman is a very sympathetic match, offering generous gain and a well balanced, natural sound. Variation between min and max on the tonewheel is subtle, but that's no bad thing.

VE8000PB

During development, this six-string variant probably more or less designed itself. Yes, the configuration is shifted to 14 frets to the body (with 21 frets rather than 18) and the bridge is a smaller affair, but we find a similarly dimensioned, again satin-finish solid spruce/rosewood body with the same maple/half-herringbone trim, and the same fingerboard markers. Configured for fingerstyle, the neck's grip is not so different to the 12's, with a similar profile and depth but a millimetre-plus slimmer all the way up. Bridge string spacing is an accommodating 55mm. Smaller-handed players may prefer something that's a bit less of a handful, but it's an easy neck to adjust to in a traditional context, and the fretting and set-up are again well sorted.

SOUNDS

Perhaps due to its 14-fret arrangement, the guitar lacks a little of the 12-string's perceived warmth and suppleness, but it's a quite vigorously voiced OO nonetheless, with very good clarity and definition across the strings and a nice front-end snap in the lows when picked hard. Fired up, the Fishman system again does a great, smooth and gainful job.

VERDICT

The six-string Brett is a very persuasive picker, but it's the 12 that's the unequivocal ace of the pair, not just for its all-round abilities, but the fact that it's as rare as, well, a very rare thing. You simply will not find another 12-string parlour-style electro for this humble (and case-inclusive!) money; any alternative will be a pricy luthier job. 'My intention is to get the 12-string into as many hands as possible,' says Paul. Well, mate, you and Vintage are about to succeed in spades.

FINAL SCORE

VINTAGE VE8000PB	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**17**/20
Value for money	**19**/20
Looks	**18**/20
TOTAL	**90%**

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LIGHTWAVE & DINGWALL

Saber SL5 & Combustion

Welcome to the 21st century with two totally modern basses – one with a new string-sensing system, the other bringing fanned frets to the medium price bracket. Review by **Gareth Morgan**

So many bassists veer away from technological advancements and stick to the tried and trusted template popularised by Mr Fender over 50 years ago. Perhaps that's why such innovations as active electronics and graphite necks have remained outside the mainstream for so long, but here's a pair of instruments where evolution is not a dirty word – it is the code by which they exist. Ladies and gentlemen: the Dingwall Combustion 5 SII and the Lightwave Saber SL5.

Lightwave Saber SL5

At a quick glance, the shiny black SL5 looks no more than slightly unusual. It has an alder body with a distinctive scoop at the butt, a comfy maple neck with 24 frets, a rosewood fingerboard with offset pearl dot markers and a small Ibanez-style headstock with black lightweight tuners. But cop a load of the oversized bridge! This custom GraphTech Monolithic unit contains LightWave's revolutionary optical pickup system. LightWave say that conventional magnetic pickups interfere with string vibration and foster extraneous noise. The optical pickup reads the vibration of the string by shining a light on it, a process which doesn't affect the vibration of the string and produces the purest, most transparent note; this, they claim, enables greater sensitivity between player and instrument, plus long, natural sustain and virtually no added noise. All of this is powered by a re-chargeable internal battery pack. Fully charged, you get 16 hours playing time; re-charging takes one hour – and you can play while you charge.

Super-long neck joint allows space for five bolts for extra stability

Special Graphtech bridge contains the optical pickup system and piezos too

The Lightwave's optical pickup reads the string by shining a light on it, giving sensitivity, sustain and low noise

FINAL SCORE

LIGHTWAVE SL5	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**16**/20
Value for money	**16**/20
Vibe	**17**/20
TOTAL	**85%**

FACTFILE
Lightwave SL5

DESCRIPTION **solidbody bass. Made in Korea/USA**
PRICE **£1050**

BUILD **Alder body, bolt-on three-piece rock maple neck with 24 medium nickel frets on a rosewood fingerboard. Diecast tuners and custom GraphTech bridge. Black hardware**
ELECTRICS **Active with LightWave optical pickup and iceTone piezo pickups in the bridge saddles, LightWave preamp, bass boost/cut, mid boost/cut, mid sweep and iceTone (treble) boost/cut controls, warm/cool toggle switch. Optical pickup system charger and tool kit included**
LEFT HANDER **No**
FINISHES **Ultra black, infra red, xenon blue**
RANGE OPTIONS **Four-string SL4, £950; four- and five-string lined fretless, same respective prices**

SCALE LENGTH **864mm/34"**
WIDTH OF NECK
Nut 46mm
12th fret 64mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 21mm
12th fret 23mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 9.5mm
Bridge 19.5mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 2.0mm
12th fret bass 3.5mm
WEIGHT **3.55kg/7.8lbs**

CONTACT **Bass Direct**
01926 886433
www.bassdirect.co.uk

FACTFILE
Combustion

DESCRIPTION **Solidbody bass. Made in China**
PRICE **£1300**

BUILD **Alder body, bolt-on five-piece maple neck with 24 fanned narrow frets on a rosewood fingerboard (maple is an option). Ping open-back tuners, Dingwall individual bridge saddles, chrome hardware**
ELECTRICS **Two Dingwall FD3-A pickups, EMG BT07 preamp, two volumes, bass and treble controls, active/passive switch**
LEFT HANDER **No**
FINISHES **Candy apple red, natural, 3-tone sunburst, black, matte black, vintage white, translucent white, pewter, candy apple green, candy tangerine**
RANGE OPTIONS **Various pickguard colours (add £40), matching headstock**

SCALE LENGTH
864mm-940mm/34"-37"
WIDTH OF NECK
Nut 46mm
12th fret 66mm
DEPTH OF NECK
First fret 20mm
12th fret 24mm
STRING SPACING
Nut 10mm
Bridge 19mm
ACTION AS SUPPLIED
12th fret treble 2mm
12th fret bass 3mm
WEIGHT **3.95kg/8.71lbs**

CONTACT **Bass Direct**
01926 886433
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Ibanez
Grooveline G105
A Japanese-made model with modern electronics and design concepts. If only it were a little less pricey
RRP **£2289**

The Novax fanned fret system is partnered by slanting bridge and pickups

Tiny-gauge banjo-size fretwire gives a lovely fretted/fretless feel

After a few hours with the fanned frets you'll be used to it, and the B string does sound and feel more integrated

Then there's iceTone, a piezo system in the bridge that's tailored to enhance high frequencies – you can cut or boost the amount of blend with the optical system – and there's also volume, bass boost/cut, mid boost/cut and mid sweep, the latter letting you broaden or narrow the frequency band between 200 Hz and 1 kHz. LightWave also provides a Warm/Cool switch.

Sounds

Surprisingly, the SL5 leans in a natural, old-school sonic direction. It's big and bold and the sustain is amazing: hit a note, listen to that raspy growl, appreciate the depth and focus of the B-string, and wait... and wait...and the damn thing is still ringing.

Variations? Move the Warm/Cool switch towards the neck for warmth and thud, flick it towards the bridge for brightness and detail. You get a similar effect from dialling in the iceTone, though this adds a snappier and more brittle G string. Now the EQ: full bass boost is huge, warm and shakes the room, the mid cut/boost and sweep controls make it easy to access punch and an excellent barky finger-funk tone, especially with a little bass boost in tow.

Dingwall Combustion

Just like the top-line Dingwalls, the Chinese-made Combustion carries the Novax Fanned Fret System developed by luthier Ralph Novak after studying the workings of the grand piano and the harp. On the Combustion this means a varied scale length, 34" on the G string moving to 37" on the B, the idea being to gain an optimum length for each string, especially the low B.

Another interesting element is the frets. After consulting with endorsee Lee Sklar (James Taylor, Phil Collins, Billy Cobham), Dingwall became hip to the benefits of narrow, banjo-size frets – less metallic tone, smoother glissandos and a faster feel. This banjo-size fretwire produces an interesting marriage of contemporary and retro.

The Chinese-made Combustion has an alder body (in candy apple red) with a scoop at the bridge but more traditional fin-like horns. The Dingwall FD3-A alnico pickups (are slanted in sympathy with the frets and the individual saddle chrome bridge is also offset. The neck is a five-piece maple affair with slim, playable contour and the fingerboard is rosewood with offset dots. The electronics include an EMG BT07 preamp with two volumes, bass and treble plus an active/passive switch.

Sounds

A few hours with the fanned frets will get you completely used to it. Tonally, the Dingwall is less in-your-face than the SL5, with growling lows and clarity on the treble strings with a hint of nasal high mid. Often, if a B string is focused enough for practical use it sticks out like a sore thumb against the rest in terms of volume and tonal quality, but here it sounds and feels much more integrated – lightweight, but practical. The Dingwall benefits from rolling on some bass EQ; both pickups on gets a little woolly on full boost, but the other two options benefit from extra weight and width, while extra treble increases detail and vibrancy at the expense of some zingy high mids becoming more dominant at the top end.

Verdict

These basses force you to think about your approach to playing, and you have to agree that it's fantastic to see bass makers doing something a little different. You may prefer the sound of magnetic pickups, warts and all, but we'd recommend checking out the Lightwave for overall sound – it's a worthy new approach. As for the Dingwall Combustion, the quality of its B string is excellent, but be aware... you may love it so much you'll start thinking about one of the Canadian-made Dingwalls, and they start at £1750.

FINAL SCORE

DINGWALL COMBUSTION 5 S11	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Playability	**16**/20
Sound	**16**/20
Value for money	**16**/20
Vibe	**16**/20
TOTAL	**82%**

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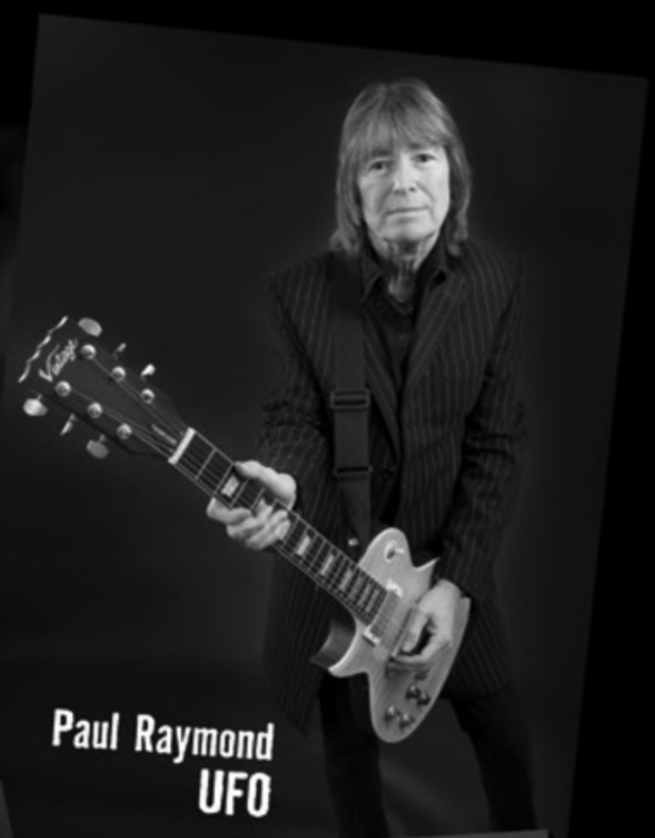
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FENDER

Bronco 40 Combo

40W and a single 10" won't shake the pub, but the amp models and effects plus computer connectivity will come in useful. Review by **Gareth Morgan**

With the Bronco 40 Fender has joined the ranks of Roland and Line 6 in producing a digital bass combo loaded with modelled amps and effects which offers a variety of sounds perfectly suited to the enthusiastic home studio owner. Constructed from MDF, the Chinese-made Bronco measures 387mm high, 457mm wide and 286mm deep and weighs a reasonable 13.22kg/29.15lbs. It's dressed in weave-effect vinyl, sits on four rubber feet and sports metal corner protectors, a single top-mounted carry-handle and a black metal grille to protect the Fender Special Design 10" speaker. As there's only 40W on offer this was never intended to be a serious gigging unit; its main raison d'etre lies within the black control panel.

Here you'll find five regulation controls including a three-band EQ with +/- 15dB available from Bass, Mid and Treble. The fun really starts with the Preset control. This gives access to eight modelled amps, some with familiar names and some not (the one called Monster actually seems to be three varied distortion options), arranged in three banks conveniently denoted by a change in LED colour from amber to green to red. There are also 12 compression settings accessed by the Comp control and seven effects available via the FX control. All the features and parameters (including EQ and Gain) can be adjusted and re-jinked and then saved by the user into the green or red bank.

Other useful features include a balanced XLR out, Aux and Phones mini jack sockets, but of all of these the USB port is possibly the most valuable as it means you can connect the Bronco to your PC or Mac, store and edit patches, record digitally onto your computer and access other handy online services via Fender's website.

The Fender Bronco 40 has a reasonable amount of depth, punch and clarity plus a sensibly attenuated EQ section

Sounds

The Bronco has a decent amount of depth, punch and clarity plus a sensibly attenuated EQ section. Obviously its practical usage won't go much beyond fairly low-level rehearsals or gigs: its real strength lies in the panoply of sounds for practising or recording.

Some of the patches are coloured by some form of distortion and it's tough to get rid of this without recourse to your computer, which is a bit annoying. When not distorted, the old-school patches – which include three Bassman options plus Rockin' Peg, which purports to model an Ampeg SVT – provide plenty of vintage warmth, while the more contemporary ones (SWR Redhead and Rumble) are crisp and clean. Of the effects, the octaver takes first prize and the envelope filter the wooden spoon – you'll probably want to do some serious re-programming of most of these to make them useful, but the Bronco is set up for you to be able to do just that.

Actual editing and saving of patches is dead easy, as is accessing the onboard tuner, and while we didn't get a chance to dip into the facilities afforded by accessing the website, what's on offer there massively expands the Bronco's practical value.

Verdict

There are a couple of issues here, mainly with the FX section – it's only okay, and though you can re-jink via computer we'd have liked a bit more programmability within the unit itself. However, the main strength of the Bronco is in the variety of tonal options at your fingertips. It'll be good for home recording, or for a pro track-maker who's required to play a bit of bass now and then. The Bronco is also good value compared to the competition, and it's well worth a look.

FINAL SCORE

FENDER BRONCO 40	
Build Quality	**18**/20
Versatility	**17**/20
Sound	**17**/20
Value for money	**16**/20
Vibe	**16**/20
TOTAL	**84%**

FACTFILE
Fender Bronco

DESCRIPTION **Single channel 40W digital modelling combo. Fender Special Design 10" speaker in a 16mm MDF cabinet with front porting. Made in China**
PRICE **£262.80**

CONTROLS **Gain/Channel Volume, Bass, Mid, Treble, Preset selector, Compression level and FX/Mix controls. Input and Footswitch jack sockets, Line Out XLR socket, Aux and Phones mini jack sockets, USB port**
FEATURES **eight amp models (Rumble, '59 Bassman, Bassman TV, Bassman 300, Redhead, Rockin' Peg, KGB800, Monster), seven assignable effects (Chorus, Flanger, Phaser, Envelope Filter, Octave, Delay and Reverb), distortion (inherent in certain patches: Modern Bass Overdrive, Overdrive, Fuzz, Greenbox) Compression, 24 on-board presets (16 programmable), Tuner, PC/Mac connectivity.**
RANGE OPTIONS **none**

CONTACT **Fender GB&I**
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SKB
FootNote

Pedalboard with built-in amp

RRP **£179**
CONTACT **Shure Distribution**
01992 703058 www.shuredistribution.co.uk

The FootNote is something new – a 'powered' pedalboard with a built-in 5W amp and a 6" Eminence speaker. The package contains nine pedal power cables, a generous roll of sticky-back Velcro to attach your pedals to the 1.5 square foot area of fuzzy felt, and a wall wart power supply.

The box shows six conventionally-sized pedals with a wah at one end, but eight pedals would be no problem if you ditched the wah. The weighty board is made from tough, injection-moulded plastic and it provides a foot-friendly slope.

A metal mesh dome protects the speaker, and the three amp controls – Treble, Bass and Volume – are positioned well away from the area where stomping feet might land. The amp input is a conventional 1/4" socket and there's a second mini jack Aux input for CDs and mp3 players for jamming with backing tracks.

Next to the amp power switch there's a speaker on/off switch with a headphone socket and two more 1/4" sockets for a four Ohm (minimum) external speaker and line output. A jack-to-jack cable testing facility is also included with LED indicators to display status.

Verdict

The FootNote is a solidly-built conventional pedal board. The amp is a bonus and when set ultra-low it has a decent, clear and full-bodied sound quality... but sadly, distortion of the ugly solid-state variety sets in before the volume control reaches halfway. An amp that stayed clean would have been far better, especially considering that most pedalboards will include one or two overdrives or distortions. So this little amp doesn't like high output pickups or super-gainy pedals, but so long as you are happy to use the onboard amp fairly quietly it's convenient and fairly enjoyable – and the cable tester, at least, is a good feature.

FINAL SCORE

SKB FOOTNOTE	
Build quality	**16**/20
Versatility	**18**/20
Sound	**12**/20
Value for money	**15**/20
Vibe	**16**/20
TOTAL	**77%**

ELIXIR NANOWEB
Stainless steel bass strings

Long-life coated strings for bass

PRICE **£33.99**
CONTACT **The Big Fish Distribution**
01206 38 2224 www.elixirstrings.co.uk

Longevity and value for money are major issues in the thorny subject of bass strings. Even budget sets are expensive, and 'cheap' isn't really a saving if the strings only last for a single gig. In 1995 WL Gore & Associates introduced Elixir strings for a variety of instruments, with a fluoropolymer coating designed to extend the string's life by reducing the accumulation of debris and grunge from fingers and by blocking corrosion from moisture.

One of the most recent additions to the range are stainless steel strings for bass, of which there are four different gauge sets. They're packed in a cardboard carton with each string in a stiff paper envelope and they're free of cotton windings at either end. You'll need to snip some of the length from each to get a sensible number of winds round your tuner's post but this is pretty standard practice with any bass string. The four-string sets cost £33.99, the five-string £39.99. We've chucked the ever-popular medium gauge (.045, .065, .085, .105) onto our trusty Jazz Bass.

In Use

Elixir say that the reported life of their strings is three to five times longer than ordinary strings, and endorsees like Led Zeppelin's John Paul Jones say 'they last forever and sound great'. We can report that they have a full, rich tone with plenty of lively harmonics and pleasingly fat, growling bass response. In short, exactly what you'd expect from high-quality bass strings.

Verdict

Whether or not you believe the publicity about Elixirs, we reckon it has got to be worth thrusting your hand deep into your pocket just once to check them out. There isn't really any difference in feel to 'ordinary' strings, and if they actually last three times longer then you'll save a tidy sum.

FINAL SCORE

ELIXIR NANOWEB STAINLESS STEEL STRINGS	
Build quality	**18**/20
Playability	**18**/20
Sound	**18**/20
Value for money	**17**/20
Vibe	**17**/20
TOTAL	**88 %**

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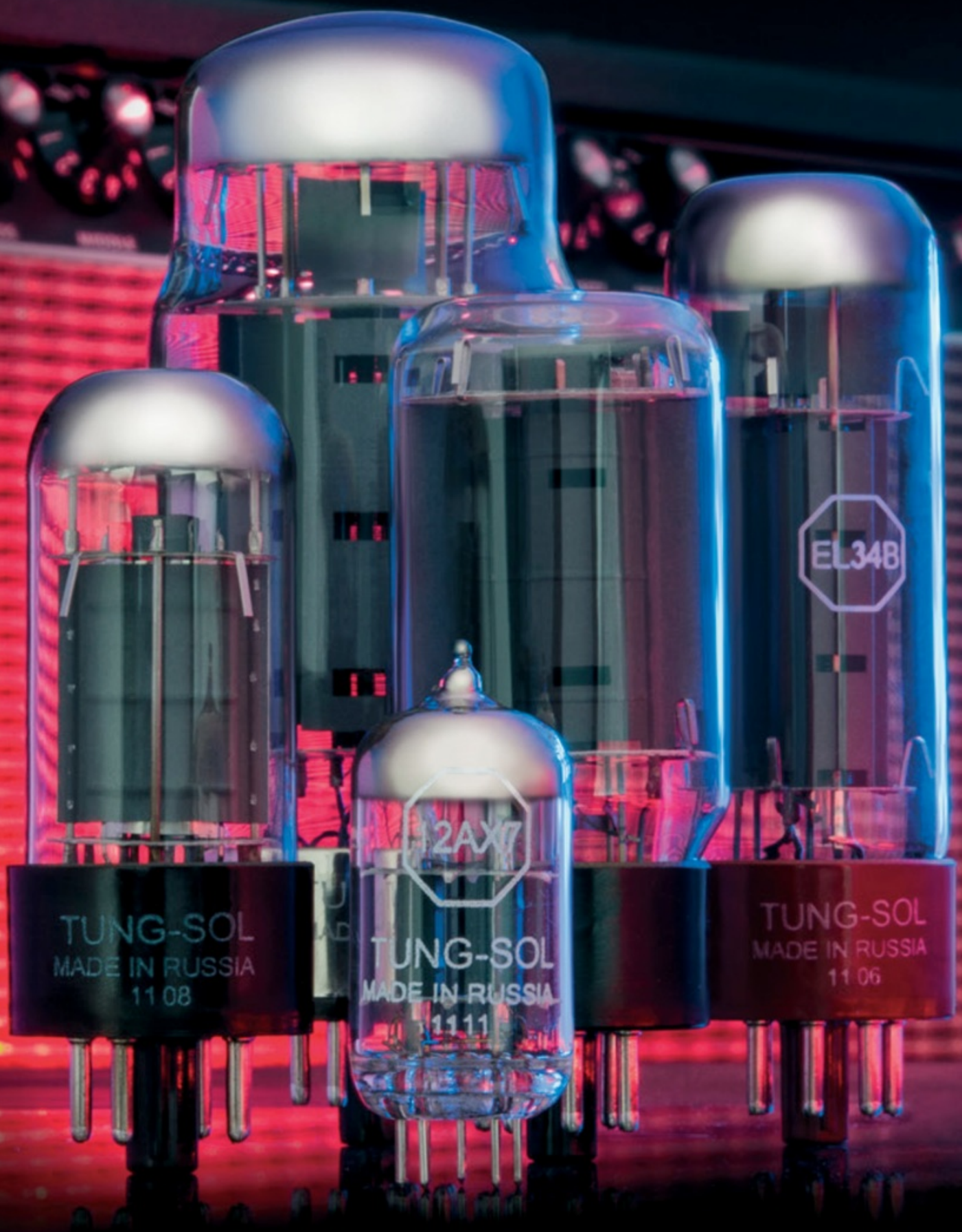

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HOOKED ON CLASSICS

PART TIME LOVER

Got a vintage guitar with an incorrect part? These days, any number of people will claim to able to sell you an original item – at a price. It all depends, says Phil Harris, on the guitar... and how much you care

I'll let you into a little secret. I know a guy that can sell you a 1959 Gibson Les Paul that is all-original – and legal – apart from only one thing missing, for only £35,000. What a deal! The catch? Well, the single thing that's missing happens to be the wood. He's got everything else... the pickups, the bridge, the tailpiece, the tuners, the pickguard, the trussrod cover, the pots, the switch, and every other part, screw, nut and bolt you can think of. But if you think the small matter of the timber is a dealbreaker, then, well... that's entirely up to you.

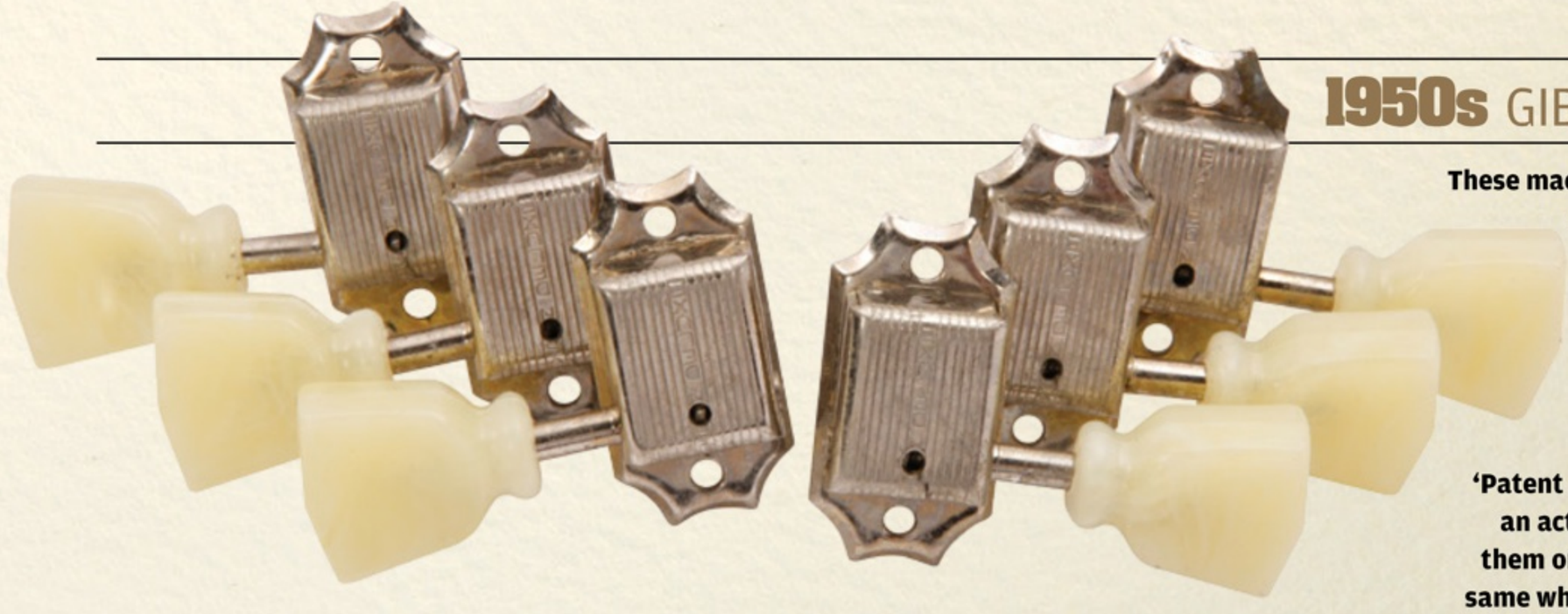
Indeed, the whole area of spare parts is a matter for personal judgement and taste. Nowadays most of the guitars I see from collectors are all-original, and even if they aren't the original parts from that particular instrument then they have the same specifications but are taken from another instrument, so it can still be classified as an 'all-original' instrument in good faith.

When we were all a bit younger, however, and the vintage phenomenon wasn't what it is today, guitar players weren't so mindful of keeping original parts. It was quite common to change things willy-nilly without worrying so much about the original integrity of the instrument. While guitars such as Les Pauls were much abused by the players that owned them, Strats owned by Hank Marvin fans around the same time were more likely to be kept in mint condition. I suppose it's the same as kids who damaged the toys they had through playing them and those who kept them pristine in the box. Me? I did both – if I could afford it, I would get two of the same little model car, and one would be left unopened to admire while the other was played with until it was bashed up.

This early experience proved invaluable when I got into guitars, and I've spent more hours than I can recall being part-Colombo, part-Lovejoy in hunting down and obtaining original parts to bring back an instrument to its original glory. But you have to consider what you're doing it for. If you have a valuable guitar and/or you're really obsessed with having it all-original (and I don't blame you for that at all) then obtaining the right parts can increase the value of the instrument... and make you feel better. But don't feel hung up on it if you don't think it's worth say, paying £3000 for an original mid-'50s Fender Strat scratchplate. On many occasions I've fixed guitars with appropriate, but not original, hardware, and the guitar is still a fine instrument in its own right. As we'll talk about later in this column, parts such as machineheads do wear out, and these need fixing or replacing if you want the instrument to remain playable.

Don't feel hung up on it if you don't think it's worth paying £3000 for a mid-'50s Strat scratchplate

Luckily the market in genuine original parts or replicas is bigger than ever. People have stripped the parts from the worst or damaged guitars and you can find pretty much any part you can think of. Similarly, there's also a thriving spares industry. Whatever you decide, as always, the most important thing is to enjoy your guitar – and be honest as to what you've done...



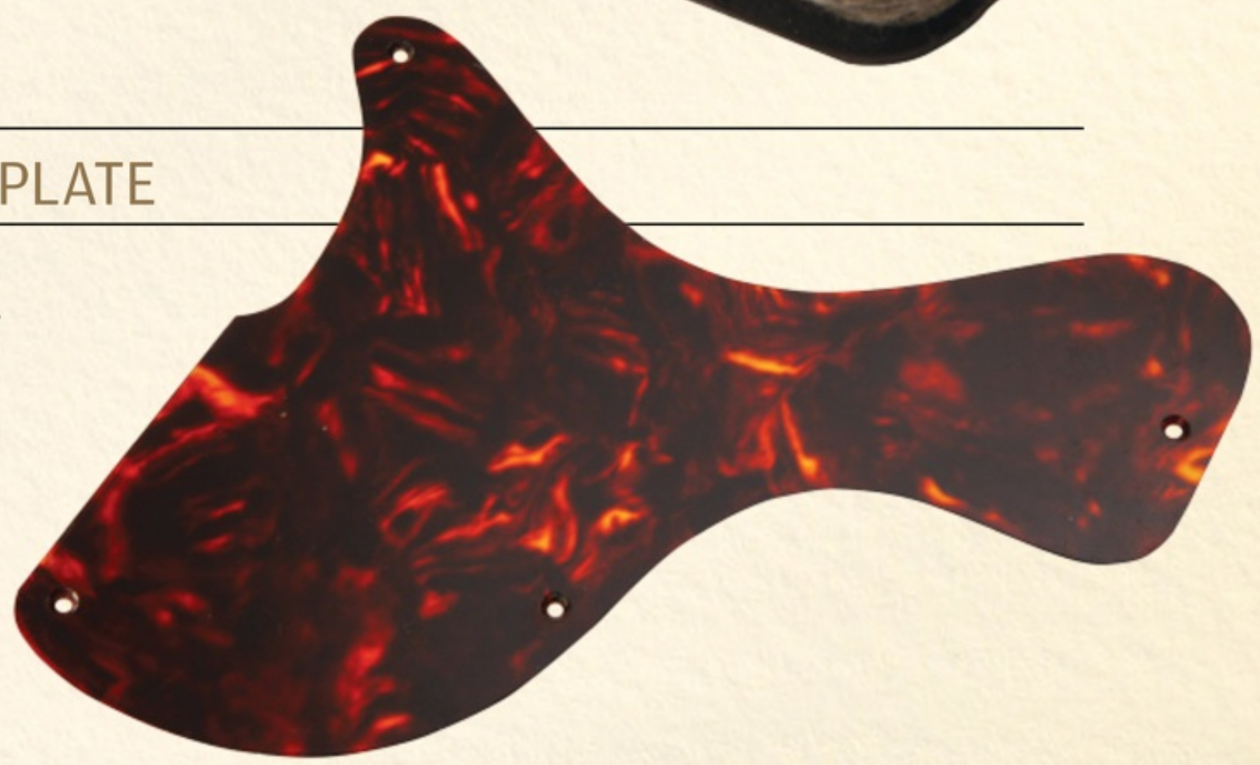
1950s GIBSON MACHINEHEADS

These machineheads are original apart from the replacement plastic buttons. Like on a lot of these sets, the plastic buttons had shrivelled or broken to the point where they simply weren't fit for purpose. You can put these on a 1956 Les Paul goldtop or a 1950s vintage ES-335. And although they have the 'Patent Applied For' on the inside, rather than an actual patent number, you could also put them on a 1959 Les Paul and it would look the same when they were fitted – and it would cost you half the price of a real '59 set

1964 FENDER TELECASTER PICKUP

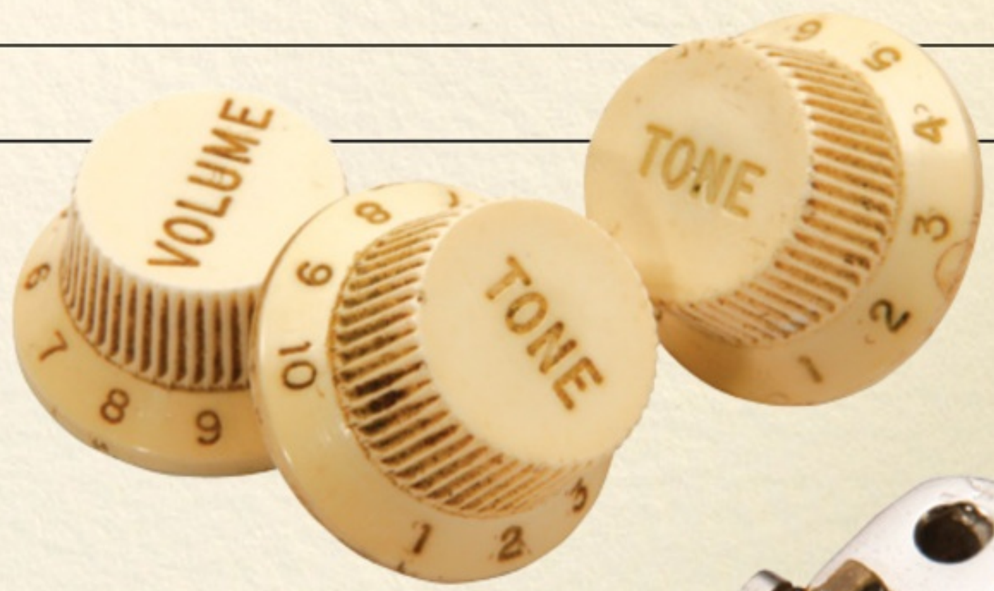
This bridge pickup is original, but a new leader wire has been fitted and the pickup coils have been stripped back a few turns to cure some intermittent problems I was getting when it was in the actual guitar. There are lot of fine replacement pickups on the market that can nail pretty much any sound you can care to mention, but I recommend that wherever possible you refurbish and repair the originals... it's too important to the sound and character of the instrument to tinker with, if you can help it. Having one original coil on a humbucker is better than none, and even if both coils are up the spout then you still have an original magnet. Failing that, it shouldn't be too difficult to get original humbuckers from a similar-spec instrument. Fender pickups are a little harder to find, but they can also be obtained

1959 GIBSON LES PAUL JUNIOR SCRATCHPLATE



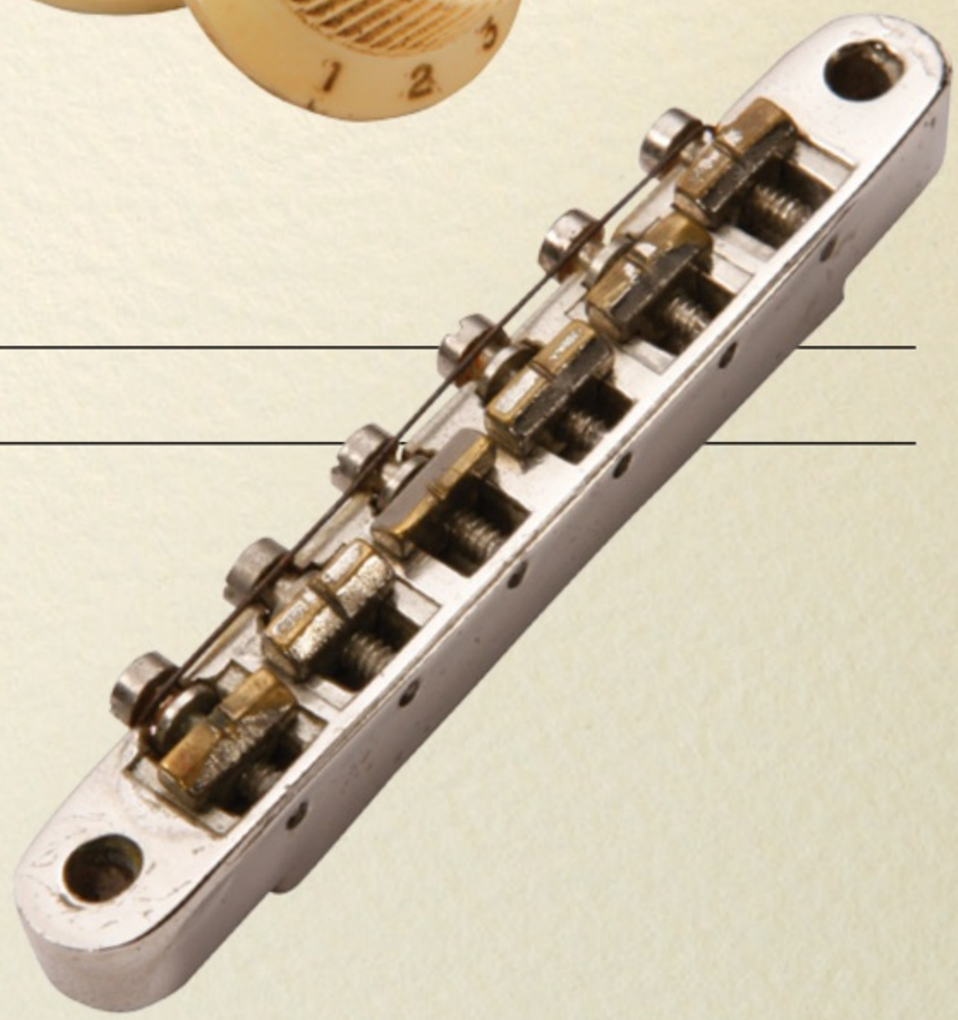
This scratchplate was obtained a long time ago, along with a guitar to which the owner had fitted a second pickup. Although this is often seen as sacrilege, rather than ruining it, the modification turned it into a great double-pickup Les Paul Junior – so I kept the original scratchplate safe in a drawer, just in case it was ever needed for another instrument. You can get replicas, but although they look the part you can't get the exact pattern of the original material. There's also good business being done in old Fender nitrate pickguards, as the distinctive 'green' hue is a good indicator of a vintage instrument. Another reason to keep hold of pickguards is to cut them up and use them to fill in any holes that appear in the ones that can appear on originals. Yes, dealing in vintage instruments can be a strange old business...

1961 FENDER STRAT KNOBS



Volume and tone controls are usually fairly hardy beasts, but the old bakelite Stratocaster ones can crack on occasion. The dilemma when it comes to knobs is whether you just replace the one that's damaged, or replace the whole set. If you really care about the exact look of the guitar then you should probably look to replace the whole set, as even if you find a single replacement knob that's from the same model and the same year, it's likely that the way it's aged will make it stand out compared to the others. If you've ever seen this arrangement on a guitar, you'd agree that it can make the guitar look strange. So, if two knobs are damaged on a four-knob guitar, replace the lot and then keep or sell the two roadworthy originals

1965 GIBSON TUNE-O-MATIC BRIDGE



If you're into bridges, this one's a real treat. What you see here is a transitional (the changeover from ABR-1 to Gibson Patent Numbered Tune-O-Matic bridges started in 1964) nickel-plated (not chrome) bridge, fitted with a wire – a bridge you can put on to pretty much any Gibson guitar made between 1956 and 1965. Apart from the inherent quality and integrity of this bridge, for a working musician gigging with an old guitar, fitting this kind of bridge with a wire is an absolute life-saver. Without the wire you run the risk of insult and injury if you break a string mid-gig – and good luck finding a missing saddle on the stage or, worse, somewhere out in the audience!

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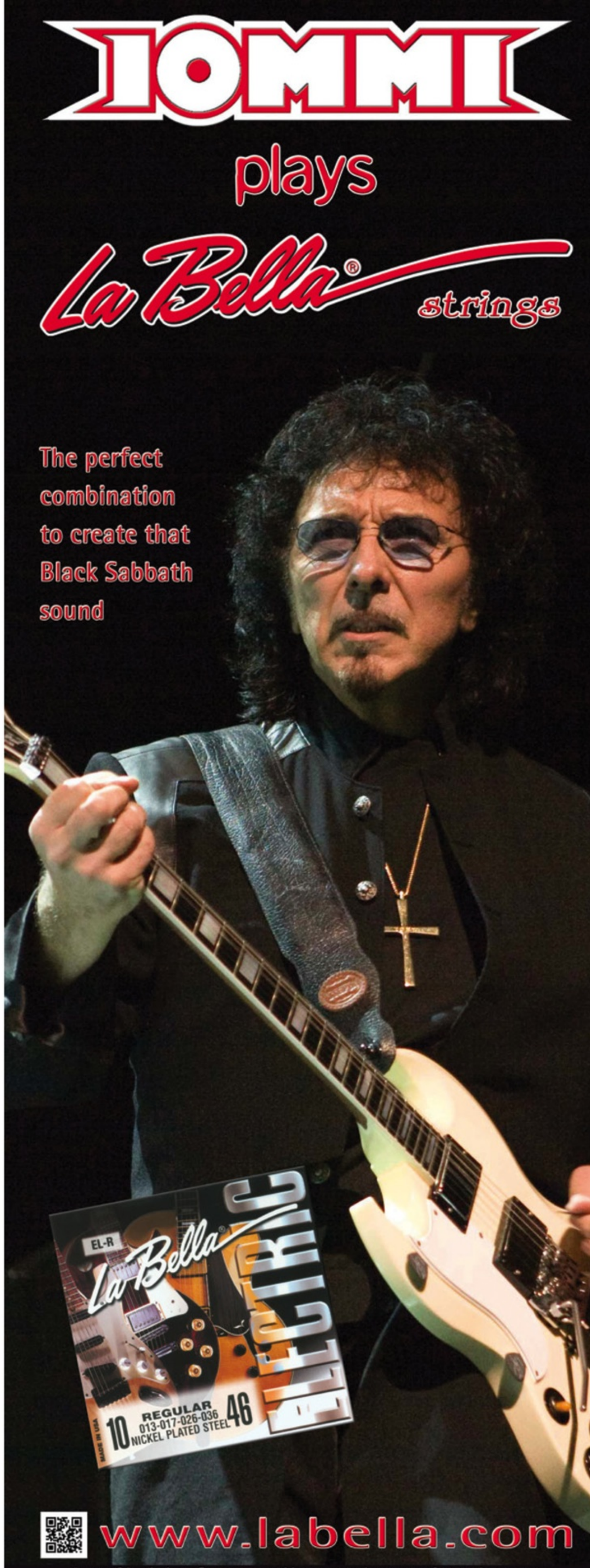

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Snow Patrol
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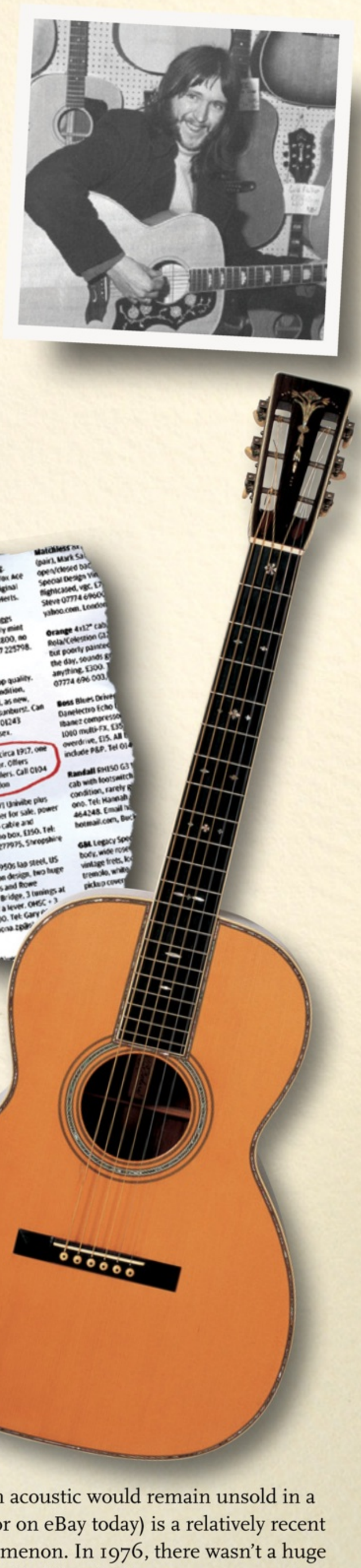


Before the internet, you never knew what might turn up in the small ads. Sid Bishop, scouting for instruments for Top Gear, came across a few things in his time – and some he'll never forget

Last month, the focus was on getting quality instruments into the shop and the pros and cons of Top Gear's US guitar-buying trips. You always had to be creative when it came to guitar retailing, and it didn't stop with merely crossing the Atlantic. One of our most successful 'Plan B' schemes would involve all of us sitting down every Thursday with that day's copy of *Exchange & Mart*. With a cup of tea on the go, we'd comb through all the secondhand guitar and amp ads, which in those 'good old days' could run anything from a few column inches up to an entire page. In addition we would place our own 'All guitars wanted for cash' ad in the same publication, usually accompanied by my own home phone number, which may, we hoped, prompt the odd person or two who had a neglected guitar hanging around the house for years to perhaps take the plunge and part with it.

Why my home phone number? Because we were aware of the fact – through bitter experience – that some people seemed very reluctant to sell directly to a dealer. Instead, they would prefer to deal with a private buyer, hence the need for the 'disguised' ad. Having said all this, my acting skills wouldn't have got me into RADA, and I very much doubt that I ever actually fooled anybody.

It was nonetheless in response to one such ad that I received a phone call from a little old lady who lived in Wimbledon in the long hot summer of 1976. She told me that she had a guitar for sale and would I like to pop round and have a look with a view to buy. As Wimbledon was not very far from Streatham, where I lived at the time, I made the necessary arrangements to call round.

I duly turned up, and while we were chatting over a cup of tea and a biscuit I learned the lady in question had married in 1917, and as a wedding gift for her new husband had bought him a guitar. Tragedy struck, however, as within a few days of the wedding, the young man had been shipped off to the trenches of Northern France, and was killed in action. In her grief this lady, suddenly a young widow, had put the guitar away in the attic, where it had remained. The guitar was only 'found' when she was packing up to move house.

The instrument in question turned out to be a 1917 Martin acoustic, complete with Martin hardshell case (made out of carved wood in those days). Also in the case, as supplied new, was a little leather pouch containing a set of Martin real tortoiseshell picks (illegal now), an original spare set of strings, and the original 1917 sales receipt, all in remarkably good condition, bearing in mind it had sat in an attic untouched for more than half a century.

I offered her £400 on the spot – a fair amount of money in those days (roughly £2,500 in today's money) and, not wishing to pressurise her too much, left her to decide the guitar's fate. I never heard from her again, so either someone else outbid me or she gave it away to a member of her family – if I couldn't buy, I hope it found a good home. Strangely enough, I wasn't anticipating a quick sale if I had have bought it for Top Gear. The current frenzy for such things (if you doubt my choice of words, imagine how long a mint 1917 Martin acoustic would remain unsold in a shop or on eBay today) is a relatively recent phenomenon. In 1976, there wasn't a huge market for historical instruments; people were more likely to want new Gibson J-200s.

This was not the first time I had come across a guitar in this fashion, nor would it be the last. I can recall purchasing a 1935 Rickenbacker in a similar way, and a flawless 1951 Telecaster still with tags and original strings among many others, but the little old lady in Wimbledon sticks in my mind. You win some, you lose some.

'Over a cup of tea and a biscuit I learned the lady had bought the guitar for husband in 1917, but that he had been killed in Northern France'

Photos: Mike Prior

Sticker SHOCK

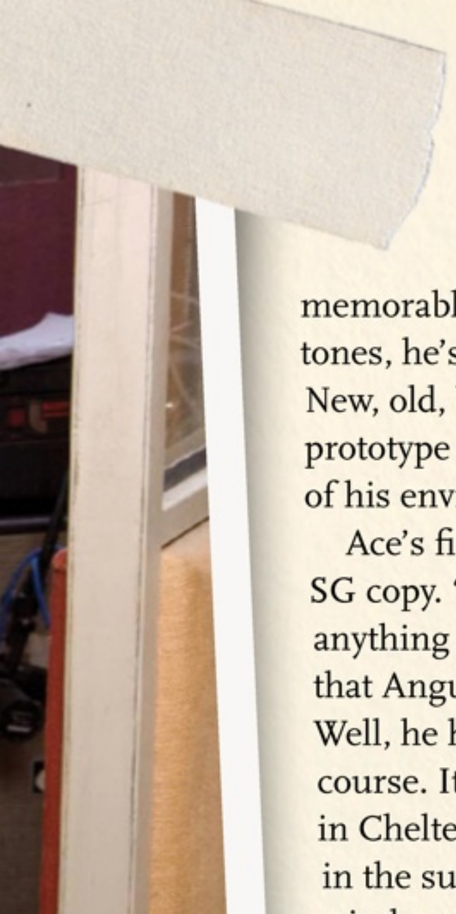
Skunk Anansie guitarist Ace is an addict: he's addicted to gear. Guitars, amps and pedals all catch his eye and he can't say no. Michael Stephens views his enviable collection of guitar goodness

Ace's trademark guitar is his much-decorated '92 Les Paul Custom

To the millions who have bought his records, he is famously known as Ace – guitarist and co-writer of Skunk Anansie Top 20 hits from *Weak* to *Hedonism* to *Charlie Big Potato*. Alongside singer Skin, bassist Cass Lewis and drummer Mark Richardson, Ace has racked up a rock career which now spans 20 years. But 33 years ago, he was simply young Martin Kent from Cheltenham. Every player has an 'epiphany' moment, and for the boy who would become Ace, the notion of being a guitarist arose from witnessing a dramatic first gig.

'The idea of playing guitar didn't occur to me until I was 11 years old,' he admits. 'But then my brother took me to a concert, and I was converted overnight. It was Motörhead on the *Ace Of Spades* tour – I'd never even been to a concert, let alone a Motörhead one! I was stunned. The next day, I was telling everyone, "I'm going to learn guitar, I'm going to be in a band." It was classic with me and my schoolfriends – we "formed" bands without any of us being able to play... we'd just argue about who *would* do what, haha!'

Decades on, and *Guitar & Bass* catches Ace recording Skunk Anansie's sixth album at London's Livingston Studios. As well as being a talented guitarist with a deep stock of



memorable rock riffs, textures and tones, he's also a massive gear-head. New, old, boutique, limited editions, prototype and off-the-wall kit is all part of his enviable collection.

Ace's first guitar, aged 11, was a Kay SG copy. 'Really crappy. I didn't know anything about guitars – all I knew was that Angus Young had one of them. Well, he had a proper Gibson, of course. It was just a cheap plank. I was in Cheltenham city centre one Sunday in the summer and I saw it in the window of a secondhand shop for 20 quid! I ran to the phonebox and rang my home, saying: "Dad, dad, can I have this guitar for Christmas?" My dad bought it... but I had to wait until Christmas before I could have it.'

The guitar most associated with Ace is his much-stickered black Les Paul Custom, dating from 1992: it's the sound of early Skunk Top 10 albums, *Paranoid And Sunburnt* (1995) and *Stoosh* (1996). 'When Skunk got signed, I was given £2000 from the record company to buy a guitar. I went to Denmark Street and tried every black Les Paul I could. I did find a great-playing 1971 vintage one, but it looked fragile and I thought it might not survive touring.

'My one was in Macari's, and was just fantastic. It's served me so well. Over the years it's had the headstock snapped off five times, so I treat it carefully, but it's having a renaissance on this new album. I guess people are always associated with one guitar – like Rory Gallagher and his Strat – so I'll always be associated with that stickered Les Paul.

'I had played Strats, and I once had a nice Gibson SG. But a Les Paul was the dream. I actually liked the weight of it. Growing up, listening to bands like Free and Guns N'Roses, it just seemed to be a classic sound. It's a man's guitar – the neck on it tells me that!

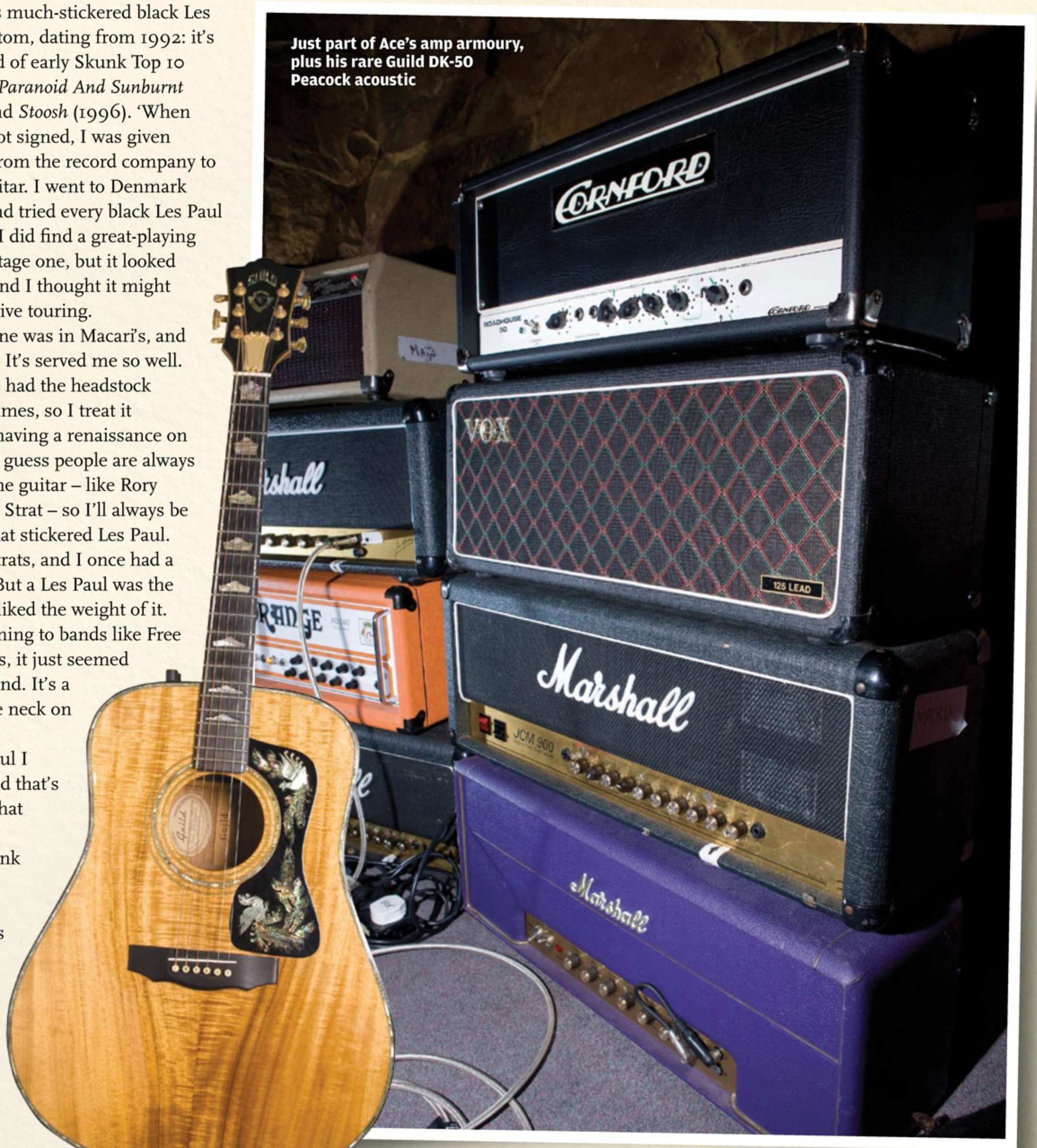
'The red Les Paul I have is a 1976, and that's great too. I used that quite a bit on *Wanderlustre* [Skunk Anansie's 2010 album]. I bought that in America as a backup, and I still pull it out sometimes.'

By the time Skunk Anansie had broken big, Ace also needed a quality acoustic for the increasing number of 'unplugged' radio and TV shows they were doing. Enter a 1990s Guild DK50 Peacock. 'This is my surprisingly expensive guitar,' Ace explains. 'In 1996 I visited Fender [then Guild's distributor] to buy some amps. I was doing an endorsement for Guild S-100s at the time, and while I was there, Jamie Crompton, the head of Fender Artist Relations, said; "Oh, look, we've just got this new Guild in." There was just one.

'We opened the box, I played it and was like "Woooow!" It sounded amazing. We were doing the TV show *TFI Friday* that week so I asked if I could borrow it. Once I'd played it, I couldn't give it back. I asked Fender how much it was, and they said £5000! They did me a slightly better deal after a lot of haggling. It's got gold parts and abalone inlay in the scratchplate... it's beautiful-looking as well as sounding beautiful.

'It sounded like a "Nick Drake guitar" to me, and I love Nick Drake. But it was only after I had done a bit of research that I found that Nick Drake had also played a Guild. I was in America a few years later and saw a DK-50 Peacock for $15,000. There are only 50 in the world, apparently, and mine is number 7. I did take it out on tour for a while, but I soon stopped doing that. Skin has managed to knock over pretty much every guitar I ➔

'My dad bought me a Kay SG copy, but I had to wait until Christmas before I could have it'



Just part of Ace's amp armoury, plus his rare Guild DK-50 Peacock acoustic

own, and it wasn't going to happen to that one! It's my "home" guitar.'

Ace's amplifiers also have their own stories to tell. He blends a lot of guitars and amps to achieve his trademark Skunk sound, and the end solution is often a mix of the old and the new – such as his Vox V125.

'It's very much an AC30 type of sound, but a lot louder. It's a weird one – sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. It always turns on, but putting it on a track? Sometimes it sounds shit. Different cabs and different studios all seem to affect it, but you can't beat it for a vintage sound. I bought it from Vintage & Rare in Denmark Street. It wasn't even expensive. I went in there one day and said on a whim, "Got any old amps?" They brought it up from the cellar, covered in dust. They weren't sure it worked, but I played it and bought it for £200. Bit of a score! But it's an overdubbing amp, really. I can never be sure enough of it for a whole track.'

sound. The Orange AD140 is semi-crunchy, a cleaner sound, but it's good for a blend and I use it often.'

When it comes to pedals, Ace is beyond counselling. He buys effects like most people buy bread, and in 2003 he set a Guinness world record for linking 100 different pedals simultaneously and playing the *Smoke On The Water* riff 85 times as a stunt for the Brighton Institute for Modern Music, where he also teaches (the noise was, of course, expectedly terrible).

Skin's Fender Tonemaster plus Ace's JCM800, an Orange AD140 and his old JCM900

'Marshalls are like water: you can get fizzy, still, strawberry, lemon – but it's still a Marshall'

His two main Marshalls are different. 'Marshalls are like water,' Ace jokes. 'What flavour water do you like? Fizzy, still, strawberry, lemon? At the end of the day, it's water. That's what Marshalls are.'

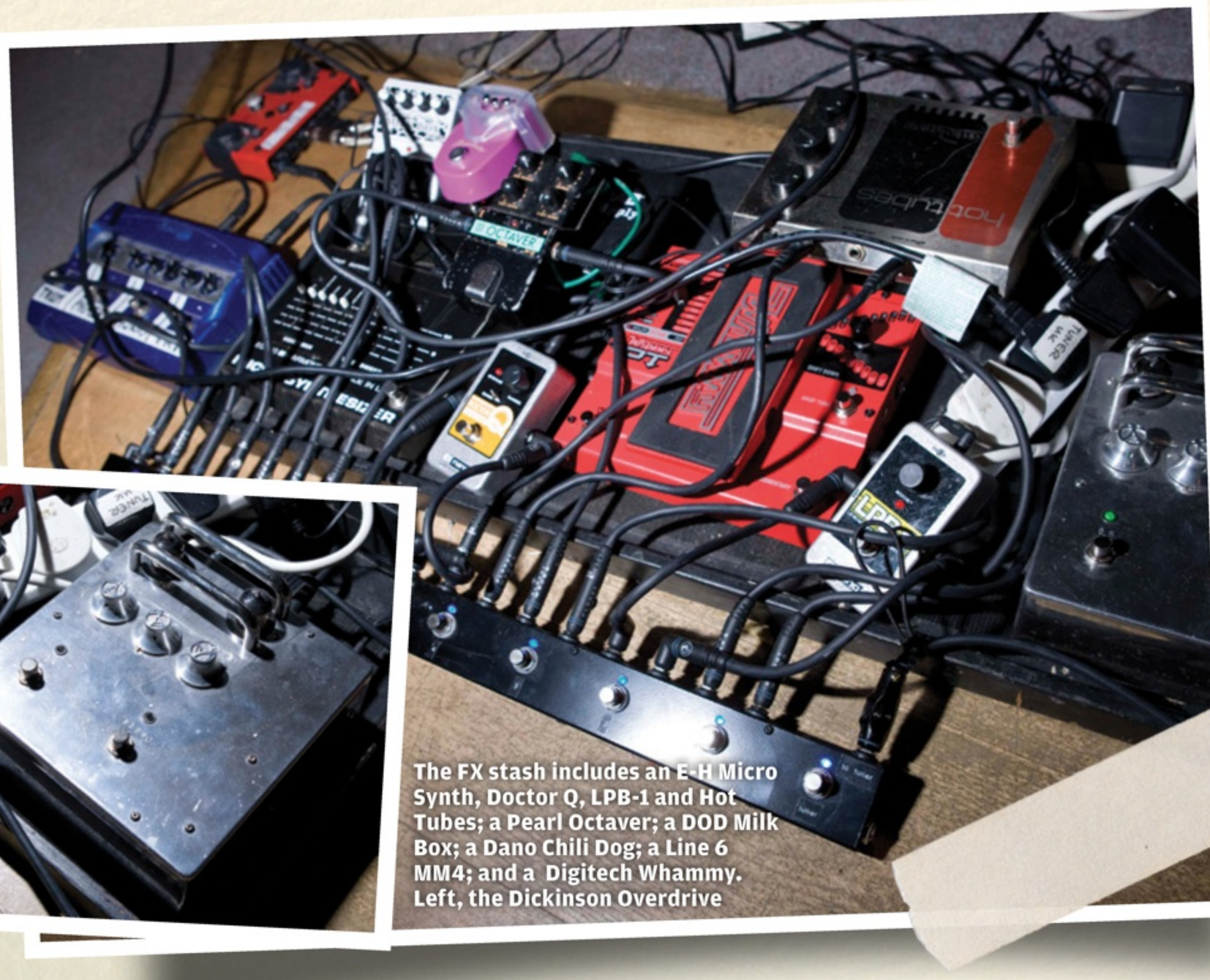
Ace's black Marshall JCM800 was a used ex-hire model that he came across and loved. He paid £600 for it. 'An old 800 is about £1200 now,' he notes. 'It's odd, because when I was a kid some Marshalls were really super-cheap. This is the best-sounding Marshall I have.

'The purple one is a 30th Anniversary model from 1992. Only 30 of this colour were made. It was another hire model from Marshall, but I thought it sounded better than all the Plexis I tried, so I "hired" it and got a receipt from Marshall confirming that. Then, I said, again – I can't give it back! So, to be fair to them, I got to keep it for the hire price for recording an album.

'The Cornford Roadhouse head is a favourite. It's a boutique-y vintage-sounding head, similar to a Marshall JCM900. I still have my original Marshall 900 which I've played since the beginning of Skunk: it's on every record, every tour and it's never broken in 20 years. The Fender Tonemaster is Skin's, and we use that to double the Marshall for a gnarly vintage

'I got something new yesterday!' he laughs. 'I love pedals, but the thing I am most excited about is the GigRig Quartermaster. It's not a pedal, it's the strip across the front. It's a relay strip; you plug in all your pedals and it accesses the one you want. Everything else is bypassed. For recording, you don't lose any sound quality, the tone of your pedal and amp is preserved. It's simple but brilliant. When you're trying to find a sound for recording, you can be on the floor swapping pedals, swapping leads... it can take an age. But this is fast, it does what it says on the tin. I'm completely sold on it.

'I'm also liking the Dickinson Overdrive pedal. It's another prototype, from about a year ago. It's another one I asked to test, and then never gave it back. It's all-valve, a really nice natural-sounding overdrive pedal. It's organic, and the harmonics – my ➔➔



The FX stash includes an E-H Micro Synth, Doctor Q, LPB-1 and Hot Tubes; a Pearl Octaver; a DOD Milk Box; a Dano Chili Dog; a Line 6 MM4; and a Digitech Whammy. Left, the Dickinson Overdrive

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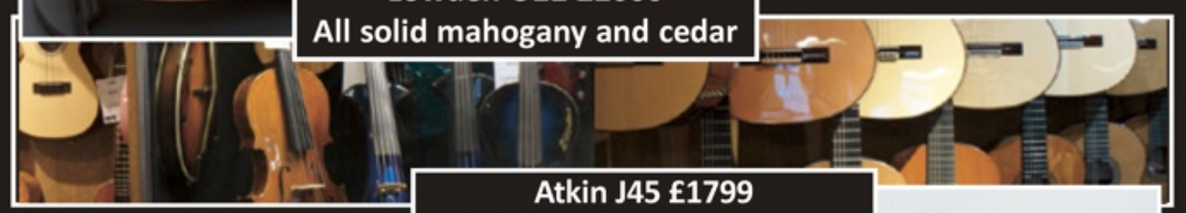

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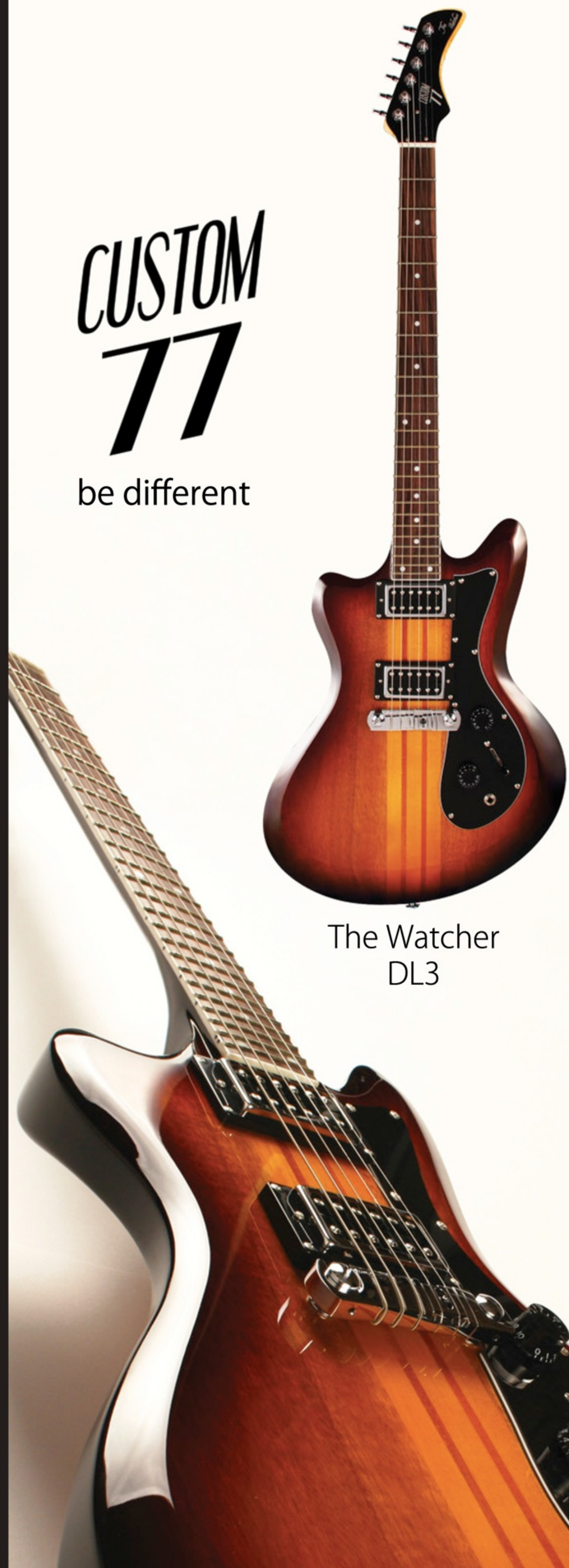

The Watcher
DL3

prototype looks like it was made out of parts of an old motorbike. It's a *really* good quality overdrive. Another favourite is the Electro-Harmonix Hot Tubes. That's an original 1970s one, another great overdrive pedal.

'All the other pedals I have, most players will have seen before. But a new, even revolutionary one, is the DigiTech Whammy DT. It does the divebombs and bends and all that, but you have that on one side, and on the other you have a de-tuner that tracks the guitar. So if you want to drop a semitone, it changes the tuning for you. You can do it up to an octave, and it tracks it totally accurately. You can still use the Whammy side of the pedal at the same time. As a piece of engineering, it's amazing. For overdubs, when you may want to play something in a different octave to double a track, it's brilliant. It's a studio essential for me now.'

Back on the guitar stands, a perhaps surprising key piece of kit is Ace's 1990s Fender Telecaster. 'I *think* it's a Jerry Donahue model, but I could be wrong. The salesman told me it was!' (We think it might be a fairly rare TLG-70P Deluxe Telecaster, made in Japan.) 'When we were in America in the early '90s, me and Skin went to Guitar Center to buy guitars, as you do. Skin bought a white Tele, I bought this.

'Here's a trade secret – all the Les Paul guitars on earlier Skunk albums are doubled with this Tele. I could get the weight from the Les Paul, but the "tone ringing" is from that Tele. It's 20 years old now, but still really beautiful to play.

'When we're writing, the Telecaster is always the one. It's a bit of light relief, literally, from a PRS or a Les Paul. I never played it live until the *Wanderlustre* tour, as I recorded a lot for that album on that guitar. But the pickups are a bit noisy live.'

Another loved acoustic is Ace's Larrivee D-50. 'I needed another acoustic for TV shows and acoustic sessions. It's not "better" than my Guild, but it's different... and beautiful-sounding. It wasn't cheap, three grand or so, but you can feel the quality. Skin's got one as well, with a slightly different headstock. That's my favourite acoustic for touring right now, as I'm not too precious about it.'

'Here's a trade secret – all the Les Pauls on the early Skunk albums were doubled on this Tele'

For recent gigs and recordings, Ace is all up to date. His main electric is a PRS Tremonti from the mid-2000s. 'I swapped the pickups to the 57/08s – the same wire as a Gibson humbucker – so it's kind of vintage-sounding, a bit duller than the standard Tremonti models,' he says. 'It's very heavy. It's got a trem on it but I've put a block behind it so it doesn't go back. It's got a wide-thin neck, more comfortable to me that a regular Gibson Les Paul. It's the one I use live for back-catalogue Skunk songs as my Les Paul is pretty battered. The rest of the band were a bit unsure of the sound, but when I changed the pickups it sounded like my old black Les Paul. The Gibson-wire pickups are not as "perfect" as the PRS ones, they're a bit more gnarly, but to me they sound fantastic.

'The PRS Mira is another good one. It's like PRS's version of Gibson's SG Special. ➔

This PRS Tremonti has PRS 57/08 pickups, wound on a '50s machine

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Ace also has a Gibson Firebird (far left) and a Framus Jan Akkerman (far right)

The ones with humbuckers are nice, but the ones with soapbars are great. Single-coils on a PRS, eh? It turns it into a completely different animal. It's not vintage at all, but it sounds old. A beautiful mahogany guitar, so simple.'

And, finally, there is something very new. It looks like a Fender Telecaster, but has a body built of metal. And, no, it's not a Trussart.

'It's by a small company in Italy called Alusonic,' Ace explains. 'About two years ago, this guy came to Cass and said "I've made a bass, just like your Musicman, but it's aluminium." This guy was a big fan of Skunk, and Cass tried it and loved it. When we played in Milan I met him. I said I was really happy with Gibson and PRS, but said I'd like a really nice single-coil guitar. I forgot about it... we were just hanging out. But then he called to say he was coming to London and said: "I've built you that guitar." When I played it, I was amazed. The feel is fantastic, it sounds amazing. It sounds better than my Fender Tele that I play in Skunk regularly. It's got noiseless pickups, so there's no buzz at all. It's new, but in the top three of all the guitars I own. Probably half of the guitar parts on this album are on the Alusonic. It's a gem, totally handmade.

'Like most players, I suppose, I was unsure about what a metal-bodied guitar would sound like. But it doesn't sound metallic – it's crisp but really open-sounding, like a really good wood guitar. Right now, that's my main inspiring guitar.'

'It's like buying trainers, I guess. Get another guitar and it gives you a buzz again'

Despite his wide range of old, new, collectable and boutique instruments, Ace insists he doesn't see himself as a collector. 'I don't leave things in boxes. What I have is what I use for recording. I have more guitars at home, but a few have been retired over the years. It's like buying trainers, I guess. Get another guitar and it gives you a buzz again! My motivation is simply to have as many different guitars, amps and pedals to help me record and play.

'I've never sold a guitar I really like. I have sold stuff, but only the ones I didn't get on with. I've still got a brown tobacco 1967 Gibson SG Special... but the intonation is difficult when you put it under a microscope.'

So if someone handed Ace a blank cheque for a guitar, what would be next on his shopping list? 'Oh, I'd buy a '50s Gibson Les Paul goldtop with P90s,' he grins. Don't expect it not to happen.

Alusonic guitar: 'It doesn't sound metallic... it's like a really good wood guitar'

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Acoustic Rescue

Buying an acoustic guitar with 'issues' needn't be too much of a risk if you're handy and prepared to get stuck in. **Huw Price** snapped up a promising-looking contender from the internet and set to work

From the outset I want to say that the guitar we've chosen to be this month's patient, a Recording King, is a great guitar. Essentially it's a pre-war style Martin replica with solid mahogany back and sides, a solid sitka spruce top, a one-piece mahogany neck with a soft V profile and open gear Grover butterbean tuners. There's also herringbone purfling, ivoroid binding and ebony for the fingerboard and bridge, and I was also surprised to discover that the finish is nitrocellulose and bone is used for the nut and saddle. Recording King's attention to detail is more than evident from the open-ended saddle slot and the slot-head tuner screws.

The specs might read like that of an expensive, high-end US-made model, but the ROS-626 sells new for around £600. I managed to pick this example up on Ebay for about £225 because it had some issues. After a week or so of procrastination, mostly because I was enjoying the guitar too much, it was time to address the fingerboard cracks, re-glue the lifting bridge and make a new saddle.

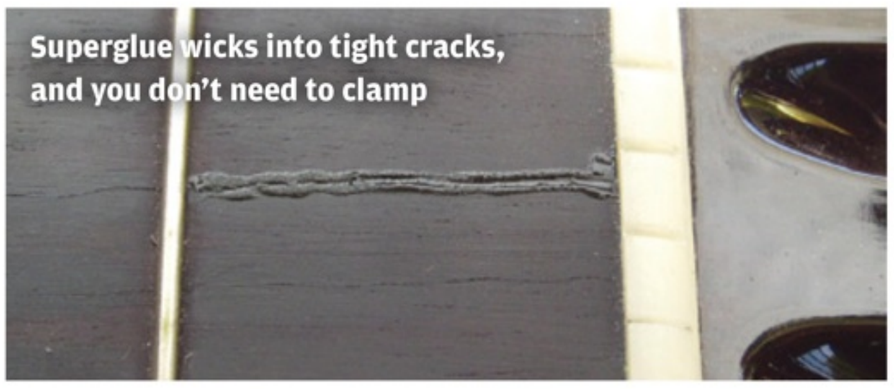
TOOLBOX

- Three bridge clamps
- Palette knife
- Titebond Original glue
- File
- Jeweller's saw
- Micromesh
- Metal polish
- Superglue
- Ebony dust
- Stanley knife blade

1 CRACKING UP

The fingerboard cracks – which, to be fair, the eBay seller had photographed to make them look worse than they actually were – consisted of several long, hairline cracks running the length of the fingerboard, and they needed to be stabilised.

The cracks were too fine to force in regular PVA wood glue or epoxy, so I resorted to medium viscosity superglue. Superglue is ideal because it wicks straight into cracks and it doesn't need clamping. After the first application I scraped the board flush with Stanley blades, rubbed some ebony dust into the cracks and applied a second dose of superglue. After the second scraping the cracks had all but vanished, leaving a beautifully smooth fingerboard. I followed up with some 1400 grit micromesh and some lemon oil and the board felt better than new. The factory had dyed the ebony for a uniformly black look; the scraping revealed the grain plus some natural brown tones, and to my eyes it looked a lot more attractive.


Superglue wicks into tight cracks, and you don't need to clamp

Snapped Stanley knife blades will scrape the hardened Superglue flush

2 REMOVING THE BRIDGE

Removing the bridge is a fairly serious matter, but here it had to be done because it was already separating from the top. First, slivers of paper were inserted under the bridge crack and marked to determine the extent of separation. Three things are needed to remove an acoustic guitar bridge – a heat source, a wafer-thin palette knife and strong nerves. Actually that last one's a joke... it's not that difficult, but you do need to be careful and patient.

Luthiers often use specialist bridge-sized heating pads but, like many others, I use a regular clothes iron. First I cut a rectangle out of a piece of corrugated cardboard to protect the finish, then held the hot iron on the bridge for around five minutes (not forgetting to turn off the steam setting).

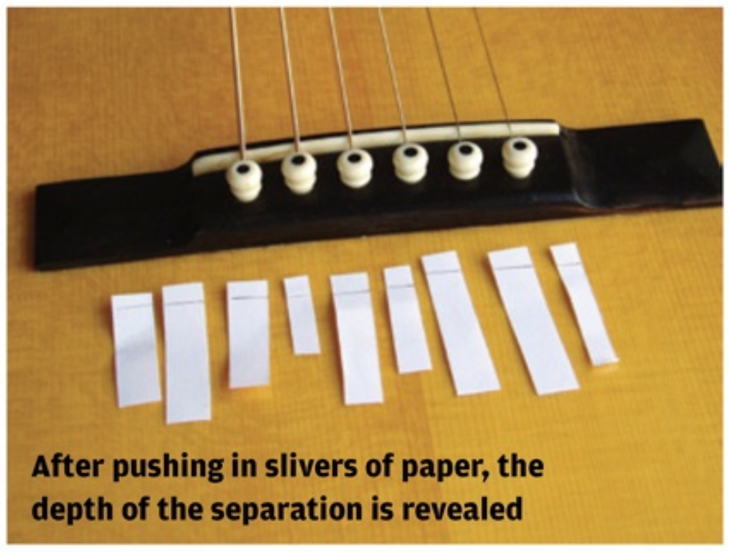
Once the bridge felt pretty hot I removed the cardboard and slid the palette knife under the existing gap. It went in quite easily and I gradually worked my way around the bridge, occasionally stopping to apply more heat. All the while you must 'ease' the palette knife between the bridge and the top, taking great care not to damage the finish and trying to work from the outside edges towards the centre rather than pushing the knife straight through.

It's imperative to do as little damage to the top as possible, so never try to lift or prise the bridge off. If you get bored or impatient, just stop, have a break and come back to it later. Removing this bridge took me around 15 minutes, but relatively little of its surface area was actually in contact with the top.

When the bridge finally released it was obvious why the back had been pulling up. Read any book on acoustic guitar building and you will learn that the soundboard wood underneath the bridge needs to be exposed for wood glue to adhere. Wood glue won't stick to polyester, acrylic or nitro finishes. Some builders carefully scrape away the finish in the bridge area after the guitar has been finished; others apply masking tape to the bridge area of top of the guitar prior to spraying. The tape is then peeled off to expose bare wood when it's time to fit the bridge.

So far as I can tell, someone at the Recording King factory simply scored out a rectangle using a sharp blade then chiselled away the finish – along with a fair amount of the spruce top. This left an uneven surface, along with some nasty gouges. Worse still, there was a strip of intact finish almost 10mm wide all the way along the area under the back of the bridge. No wonder it was pulling loose.

This struck me as bizarre considering the otherwise outstanding build quality for a guitar in this price range. However I have since learned that in early June 2011 two of Recording King's head honchos re-trained the factory's bridge gluing staff to ensure finish scraping and application was standardised and correct. Hopefully the well-documented Recording King bridge lifting issues have now been remedied.



After pushing in slivers of paper, the depth of the separation is revealed

A cardbord mask is used to protect the top of the guitar from the heat of the iron

The softened glue allows the palette knife blade to slide in fairly easily. Work all around from the outside to the centre

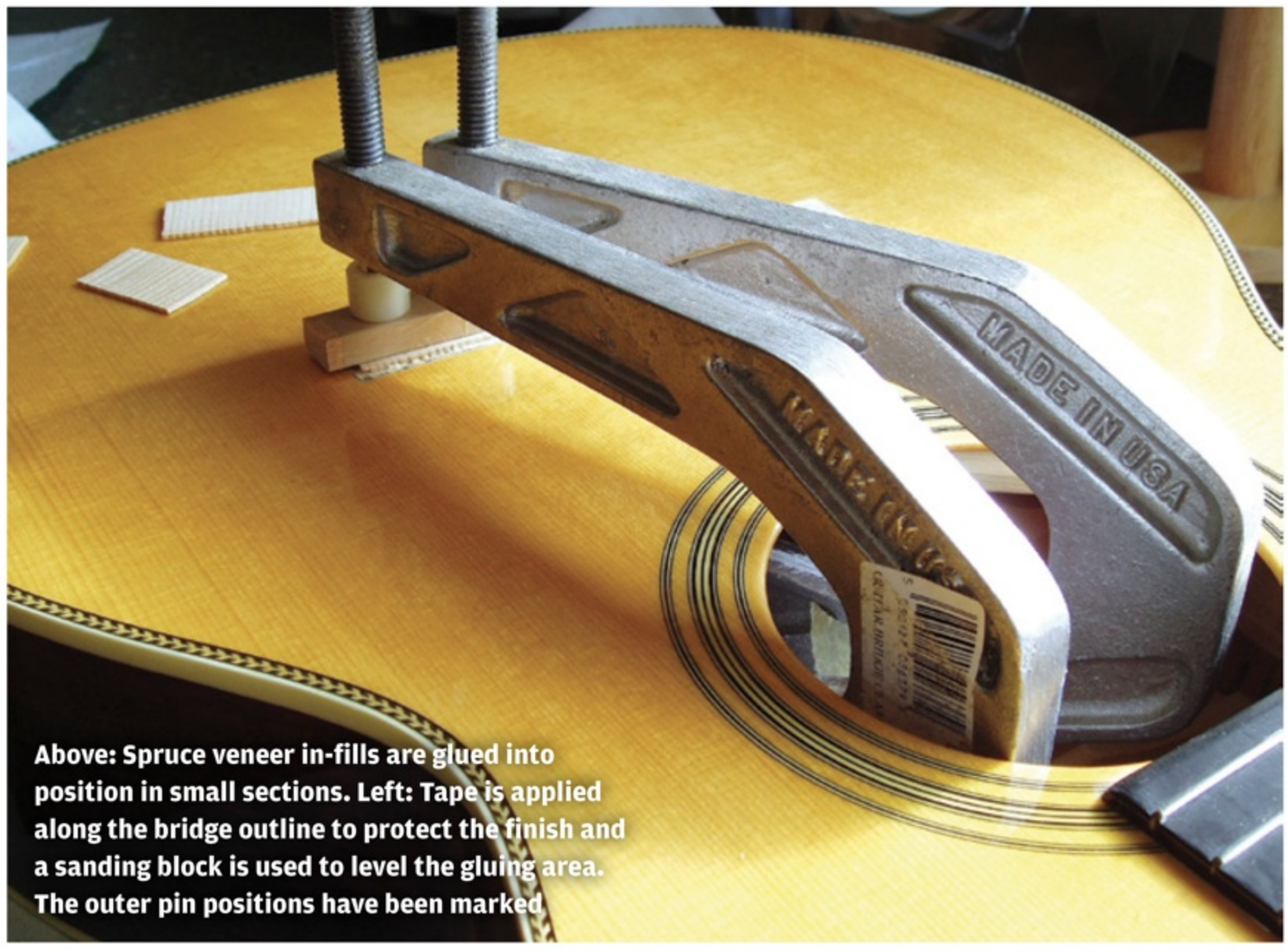
You can expect some spruce too come away

The black tape outline shows that the finish wasn't properly scraped back at the factory

3 PREPARING THE BRIDGE AREA

All the flaky wood fibres pulled loose by the removal of the bridge need to be sorted out and by the time it was sanded we had a smooth concave trough in the under-bridge area. Next we took a spruce offcut and sanded it down to a thickness of just over 1mm. The offcut was then divided into smaller lengths, and the undersides were sanded to create a slight curve. This curve, coupled with the clamping pressure, allowed our spruce patches to conform to the damaged surface of the body.

Once the pieces were glued in place they were left for 24 hours. Insulation tape was carefully laid along the edges of the bridge footprint, and we used a very small sanding block to make the patches level with the surrounding top. We chose Titebond Original glue; it sets very hard and will prohibit the bridge from moving. The glue joint should be stronger than the wood fibres, so there shouldn't be any structural issues.



Above: Spruce veneer in-fills are glued into position in small sections. Left: Tape is applied along the bridge outline to protect the finish and a sanding block is used to level the gluing area. The outer pin positions have been marked

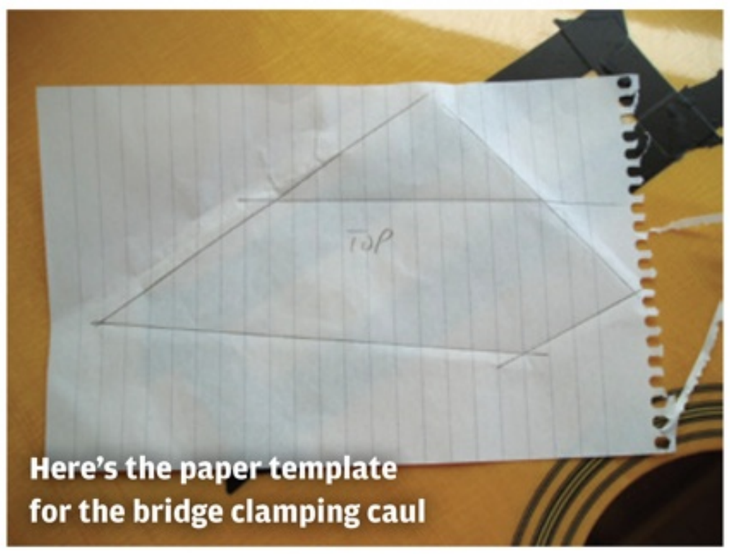
4 FIXING THE BRIDGE

Now for gluing the bridge back on. I decided to make a bridge clamping caul, because it's tricky to make bridge clamps hold position on scalloped braces. I held a sheet of white paper against the bridge plate with my fingers and used my thumbnail to push the paper into the corners of the brace/bridge plate intersection to mark the area. You can mark the front and back edges of the bridge plate the same way, and when you remove the paper the crease lines will provide a reasonably accurate template for your clamping block. Next, transfer the template to a piece of scrap MDF and cut it to size, then cut another piece, slightly wider, to overhang the X braces each side of the bridge plate. Then I attached cork pads to the overhangs to protect the braces and drilled two 10mm holes for the outer bridge pins.

Since the original bridge outline was clearly visible, I placed the bridge in position and marked the position of the outer pin holes on our freshly sanded gluing surface. I then drilled through the spruce patches and increased the diameter to accommodate the bridge pins using a reamer.

The beauty of doing a bridge refit, as opposed to a first-time bridge fit, is that you can use the existing bridge pin holes to position the bridge and stop it sliding around when it has been glued (of course this assumes that the bridge was correctly positioned in the first place). Just make sure you use plastic pins, because wooden pins will stick to the wood glue – and if that happens you'll be in real trouble.

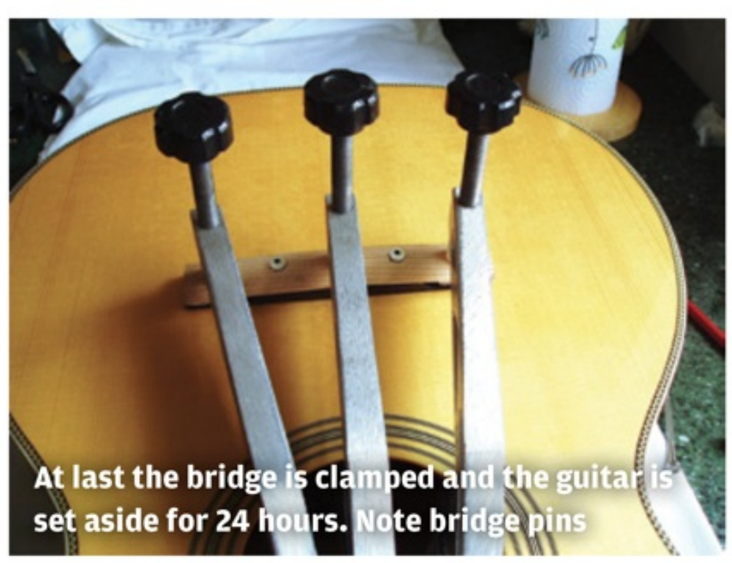
Another spruce off-cut was placed on top of the bridge along with two more holes for the bridge pins. This was done for protection and to distribute the clamping pressure across the bridge. So-called 'pyramid' bridges like this one are tricky to clamp because of those pointy bits on the top, so I stuck some cork pads onto the ends to make life easier.



Here's the paper template for the bridge clamping caul

Top, the upper bridge caul; bottom, the inside clamping caul with cork X brace overhangs

The bridge must be scraped and sanded to remove all trace of the old glue


At last the bridge is clamped and the guitar is set aside for 24 hours. Note bridge pins

Before clamping I thoroughly scraped and cleaned the bridge base to remove all traces of glue and old finish. This revealed that the ebony had been dyed black because the natural timber had so much brown colouring. The rough-looking visible surfaces were sanded with 320 grit paper followed by micromesh and, after masking off the underside of the bridge, I gave it a final buff up with black shoe polish.

The clamping caul was covered in plastic packing tape and secured to the bridge plate using two very small pieces of double-sided tape for easy removal. The bridge was positioned using the pins and clamped using three bridge clamps. The glue squeeze out was cleaned up immediately with a damp cloth and the guitar was set aside for 24 hours before the clamps were removed.

5 SADDLING UP

The bridge had an open-ended bridge saddle slot – as used by Martin prior to 1965 – but somewhere along the line this guitar had acquired a post-1965 style saddle. A new saddle was required to fill the slot properly and all doubt was extinguished when we discovered a thin shim of plastic binding at the bottom of the slot. I already knew that the saddle height was pretty much spot on – albeit with the shim in situ – so at least I had a decent template to work from.

Open saddle slot – but the saddle old saddle doesn't match

The new saddle has been cut and filed and the ends now look exactly as they should

A bone blank was inserted into the slot and a sharp pencil was used to trace the curves of the bridge onto the new saddle at both ends of the slot. Next, the blank was removed and the old saddle was placed on top to trace its shape and size onto the new blank. The ends were then drawn free-hand to create a smooth transition between the old and new shapes.

A jeweller's saw was used to rough-cut the bone blank and a file was used to bring the height of the new saddle close to the original. The intonation was already very good, but notes were slightly flat at the 12th fret so I decided to bring the string take-off point on the top of the saddle closer to the bridge pins. After a quick rub with micromesh and a buff with chrome polish the saddle was pushed into its slot and it was finally time to put the strings back on.

Verdict

The Recording King ROS-626 has an archetypal old-school slothead tone that's perfectly suited to blues, slide, ragtime and even open-tuned Celtic style meanderings. Even in stock form this guitar significantly exceeded my expectations, so a big thanks to Alex and Reuben for telling me about it.

Fixing the bridge-to-body joint noticeably refined the Recording King's tone, but replacing the saddle had a much more profound effect. The guitar felt freed up and much louder, and the bottom end gained a lot of power. The slight crashiness we had noticed was virtually gone and the overall clarity, smoothness and balance improved enormously. The work's definitely been worth it, and this one's a keeper.

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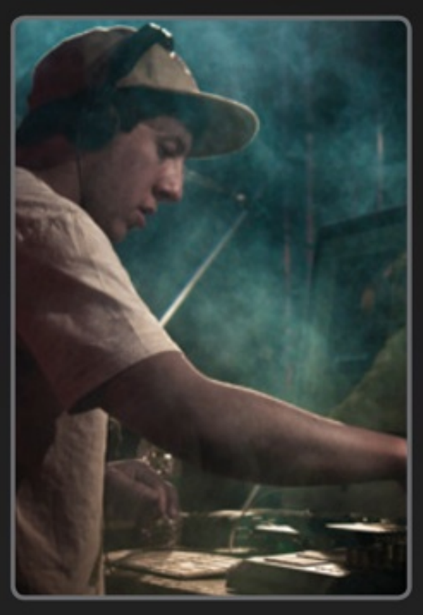

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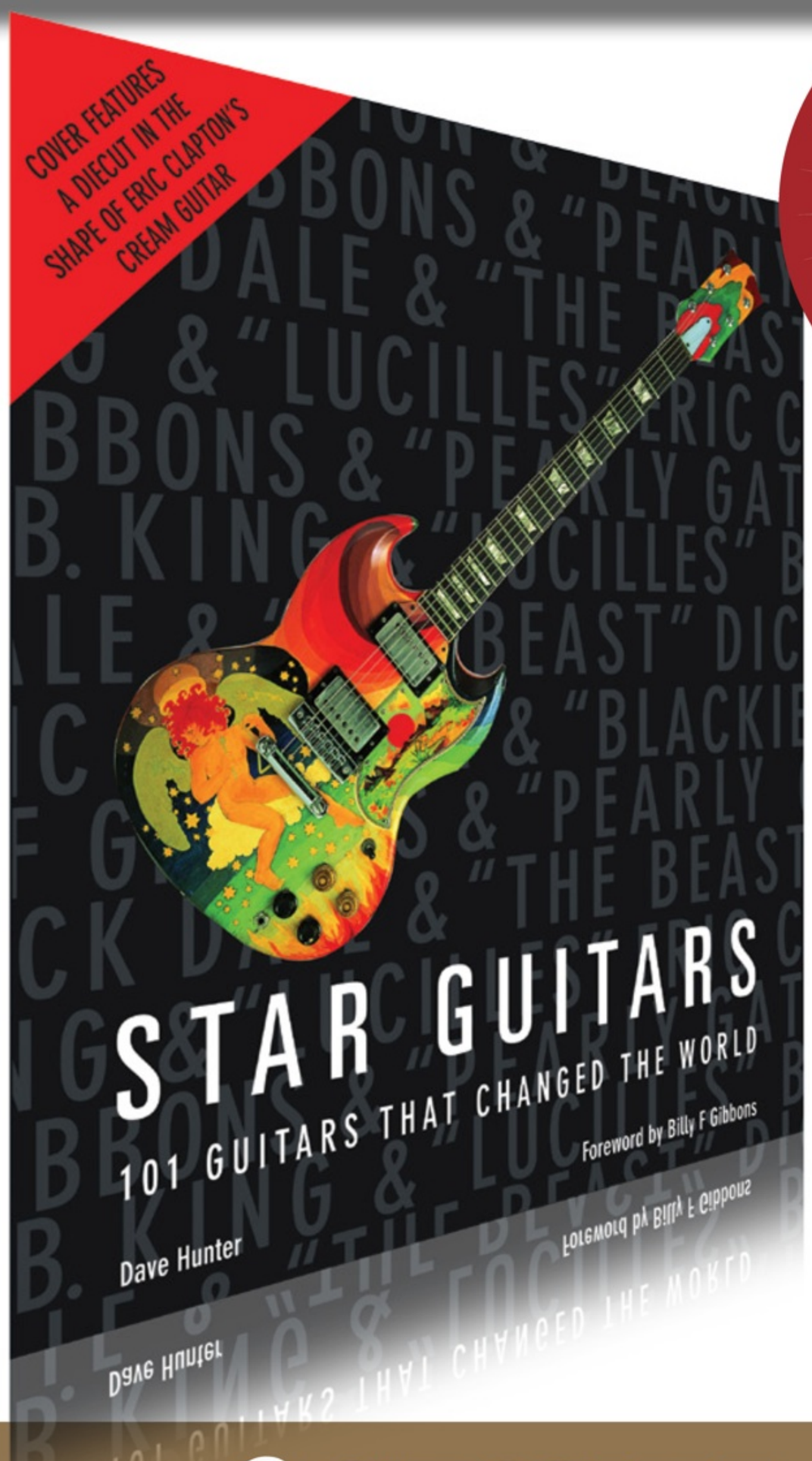

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GUITAR TECHNIQUES

WORKSHOP

PLAY LIKE

Duane Allman

Live At The Fillmore East is one of the great live albums, with bottleneck specialist Duane Allman at his soaring, brilliant best. **Douglas Noble** shows how it's done

For many rock bands, the 'live album' is a convenient stop-gap; for the Allman Brothers' *At Fillmore East*, it captured the pioneering, improvisational nature of the band more than a studio album ever could.

At Fillmore East was only the Allman Brothers' third album. As Duane Allman commented prior to its recording, 'We get kind of frustrated doing the [studio] records, and I think, consequently, our next album will be a live recording, to get some of that natural fire on it.'

At Fillmore East includes only two songs from the Allman Brothers' first two albums, and of these two *In Memory of Elizabeth Reed* was stretched from 6:58 to 13:05, and *Whipping Post* was blown up from a relatively lean and mean 5:17 to an epic 23:04. Further illustrating the freewheelin', spontaneous nature of the band, both songs include unaccompanied solos from Allman.

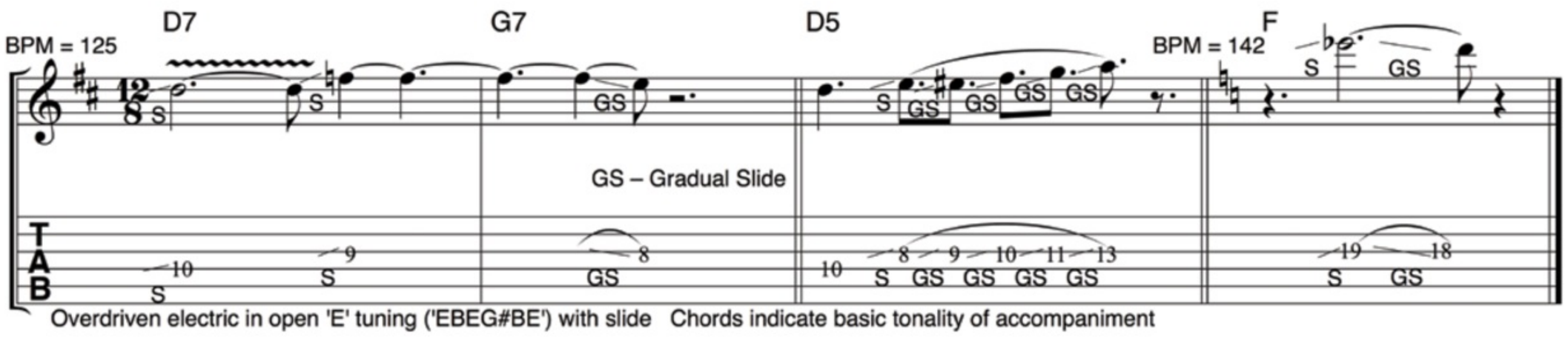
Allman is best-known for his slide playing, after being inspired by seeing Jesse Edwin Davis III playing slide with Taj Mahal. Allman used a Coricidin cold medicine bottle worn on the third finger of his fretting hand (this bottle is no longer in production, although replicas can be bought). Allman played slide in open E tuning, as can be heard on two songs on *At Fillmore East* – *Statesboro Blues*, which is in the key of D, and *Done Somebody Wrong*, which is in the key of C. Like many slide players, Allman favoured a higher action when playing slide to avoid notes 'fretting out', or touching the fretboard. He also plucked the strings with his fingers when playing slide which helped him to damp unwanted strings.

Exercises 1 to 3 look at some of Allman's slide techniques in open E. From bottom to top, the strings are tuned E B E G# B E – to avoid breaking strings, tune strings five, four and three up slowly!

Whilst much of Duane Allman's improvising and lead work is blues-based, he was also influenced by jazz, as can be heard in his *In Memory of Elizabeth Reed* solo. 'You know, that kind of playing comes from Miles and Coltrane, and particularly [Miles Davis'] *Kind Of Blue*. I've listened to that album so many times that for the past couple years, I haven't hardly listened to anything else.' Allman was influenced by Davis' 'modal improvisation', whereby solos are based on a single scale rather than a chord progression – see Ex 10.

1 SPARSE SLIDE LICKS IN OPEN E — 12/8 TIME

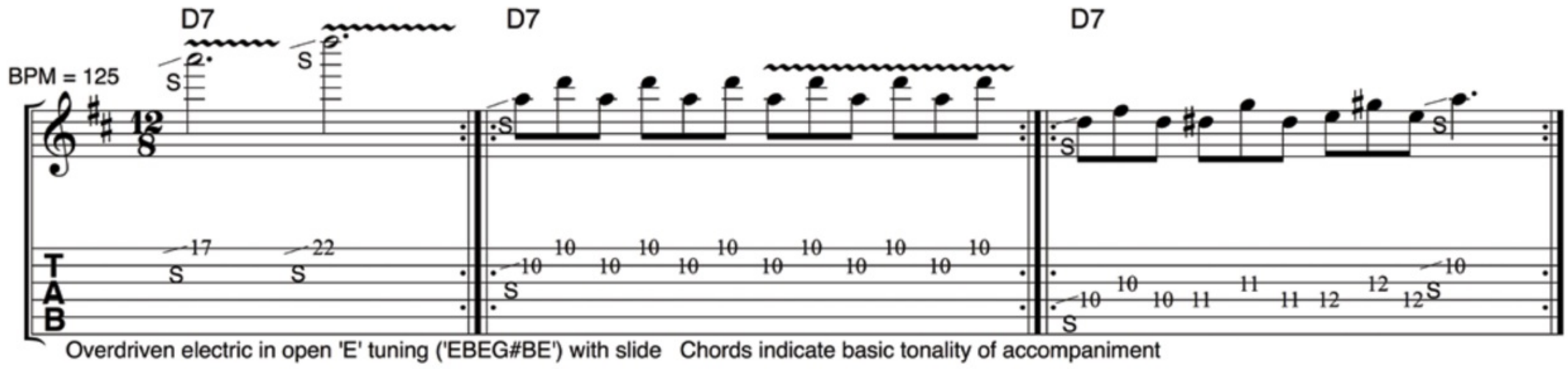
Here are some classic, minimal slide techniques used by Duane Allman on At Fillmore East – and just because they're not too busy and not full of notes, that doesn't make them easy to play convincingly! The first two bars illustrate 'held notes' and are similar to a phrase in *Statesboro Blues* at 1:39, in which Allman slides to a note then simply holds it (he can also be heard doing this at 3:34). It may be just one note at a time, but just listen to the great tone. The third bar illustrates a long, gradual slide, and is rather like one that Allman plays at 0:16 – he also uses this technique at 0:27. The final bar illustrates a slow slide between two notes which are close together, so the slide really milks those microtones between the principal notes. This exercise is similar to a phrase heard in *Done Somebody Wrong* at 3:10. He also used slow slides in the same song at 3:00, 3:27 and 4:03, and in *Statesboro Blues* at 2:01.



2 BUSIER SLIDE LICKS IN OPEN E

12/8 TIME

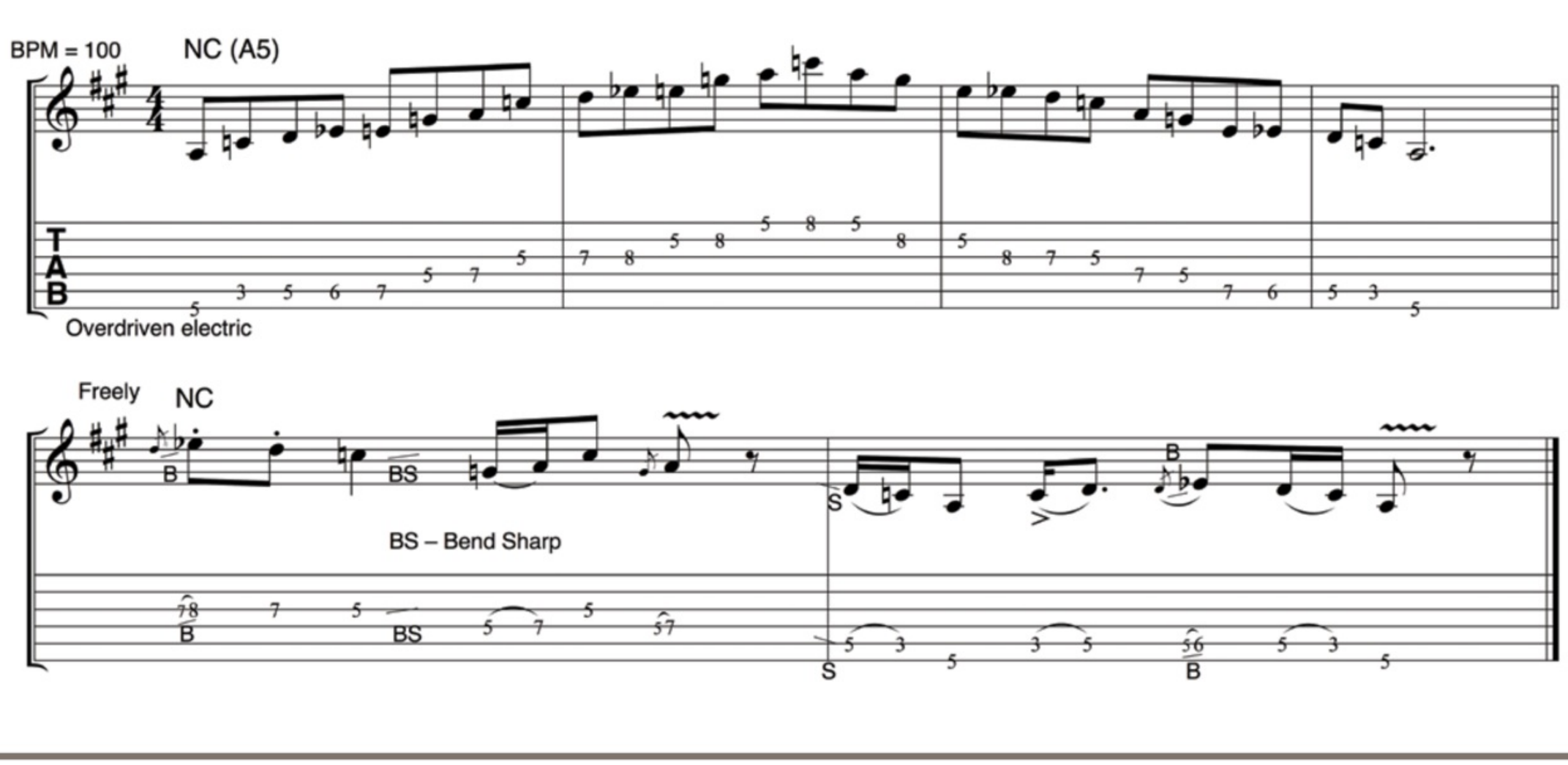
The first of these 'busier' slide techniques illustrates a fast vibrato, similar to that used by Allman in *Statesboro Blues* at 1:55 and 1:59. As ever when playing slide, make sure no unwanted notes are sounded. The second bar is based on a triplet lick used by Allman in *Statesboro Blues* at 3:44. It alternates between the fifth and root of the key; be sure to let the notes overlap, as Allman does in this lick, then play without letting the notes overlap – Allman uses this variation as well. The third bar is another triplet-based phrase, but uses chromaticism (ie moving up the fretboard one fret at a time), and is similar to another lick at 1:13.



3 PHRASING WITH THE A BLUES SCALE

4/4 TIME

The first line of this exercise shows the A blues scale. Start with fretting hand fingers three and one for the first two notes, then shift up two frets and use the first finger for the third note, then carry on with one-finger-per-fret. Strictly speaking, we're starting here in the fifth position A blues scale and quickly moving up to the first position. The second line shows some bluesy phrases similar to those in the unaccompanied solo in *You Don't Love Me*, particularly those using this scale around 7:35. Listen closely for how he uses staccato (cutting a note short, shown by a dot above or below a note head), vibrato, accents, deadened string rakes, and 'rubato' phrasing (basically, speeding up and slowing down) and gaps in-between phrases (either by short rests or silences or sustained notes) to sound expressive and meaningful. It's easy to noodle around on the blues scale and not really say anything; Allman does anything but.



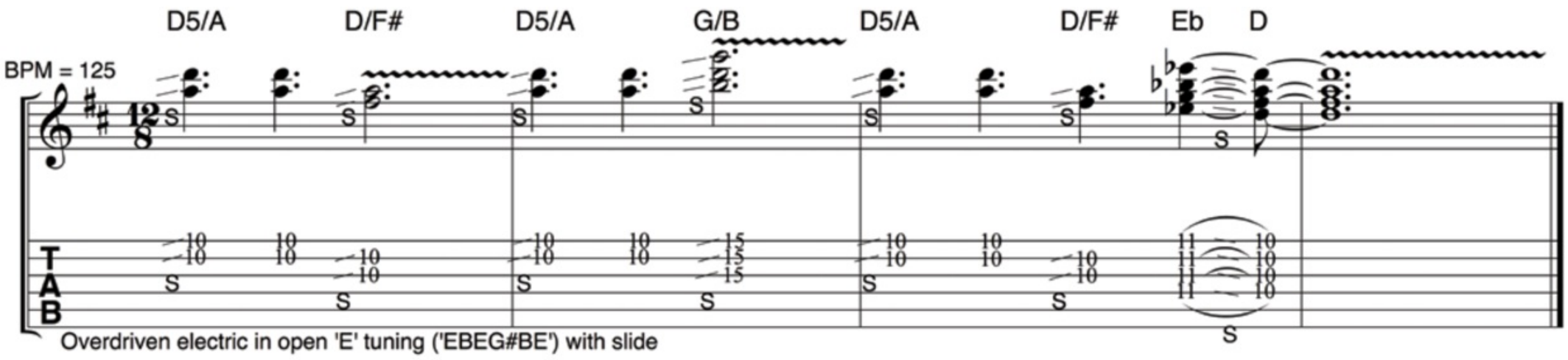
DUANE ALLMAN'S EQUIPMENT

Around the time of *At Fillmore East*, Allman favoured a 1961 Gibson SG for slide work – he had bought this guitar from his Allman Brothers co-guitarist, Dickie Betts. Allman used a glass Coricidin medicine bottle for slide worn on the third finger or ring finger of his fretting hand (glass slides are generally thought to give a 'smoother' sound than metal slides, and the weight of the slide also shapes the tone and sustain). His first Gibson Les Paul was a 1957 Les Paul Goldtop, serial number 7-3312, used in the early days of the Allman Brothers, but he traded this for a cherry sunburst Les Paul, possibly from 1958, in September 1970, six months before recording *At Fillmore East* (although rumour has it Allman asked his roadies to swop pickups between these guitars before the exchange of instruments took place). Allman played through two Marshall 50W bass amplifiers through two Marshall Bass 100 cabinets fitted with both Celestion and Cerwin-Vega speakers. He used 'split' or 'Y' leads which split the signal from his guitar, enabling him to use both amplifiers at the same. He also occasionally used a Vega PA system when playing live.

4 PARTIAL CHORD SLIDE LICKS

12/8 TIME

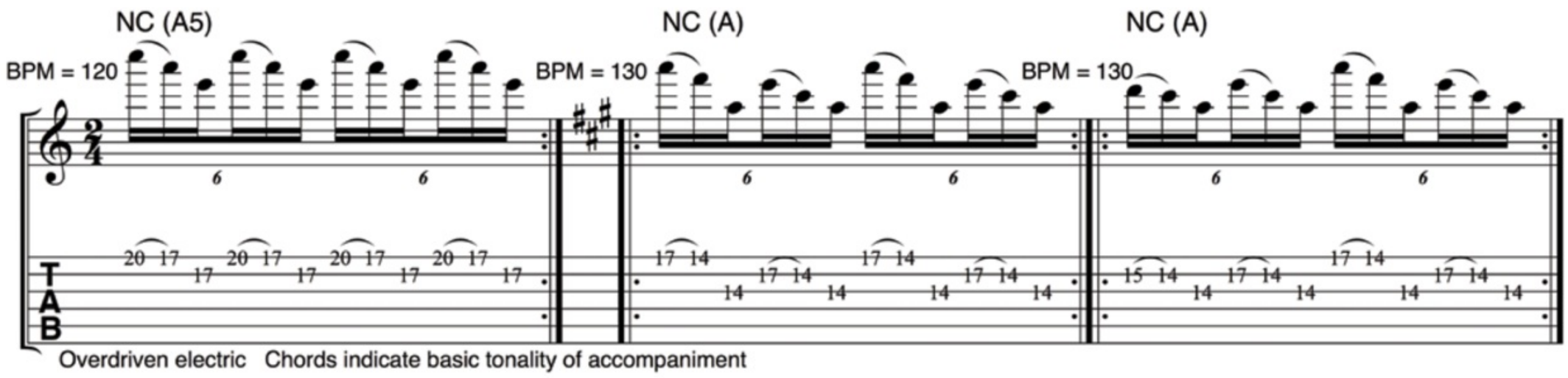
No need for chord diagrams here! In open E tuning, lying the slide across various combinations of strings produces variations of the major chord. Allman can be heard using partial chords formed by the slide in many places in *Statesboro Blues* and *Done Somebody Wrong*, similar to the phrases shown in the exercise. Make sure the slide is parallel to the fret in order to avoid 'out of tune' notes.



5 REPEATED LICKS

2/4 TIME

Allman occasionally liked to play blues stock licks over and over. In *In Memory of Elizabeth Reed* he plays the stock pentatonic minor lick shown in bar one of the exercise below from 10:26 to 10:36 – yes, that's right, the same three notes repeated over and over for a full 10 seconds! It uses three of the top four notes from the A blues scale from Ex 4 played an octave or 12 frets higher. This is a favourite lick of Allman's on this album, and he can also be heard doing the same thing in *Hot Lanta* at 2:23, *You Don't Love Me* at 2:06 and in *Whipping Post* at 3:09. Moving on to bar two, we find a lick which is similar but it based on the A pentatonic scale (A B C# E F# A). There's a great example in *You Don't Love Me* at 18:32. He also uses a variation on this lick, adding notes from the A major scale (A B C# D E F# G# A), in a manner shown in bar three. Allman milks these licks like from 18:32 to 18:40, plucking the strings with his fingers.



6 PENTATONIC MAJOR LICKS

6/4 TIME

The first bar shows a one-octave excerpt from the A pentatonic major scale (A B C# E F# A), but starting on the note of E. Allman uses this scale to excellent effect in *You Don't Love Me* at the 16:29 point, with phrases similar to the one we've shown you in the second bar. Listen to how Allman's rhythmic phrasing, helped by his use of staccato, prompts a brief and spontaneous audience 'clap along'.

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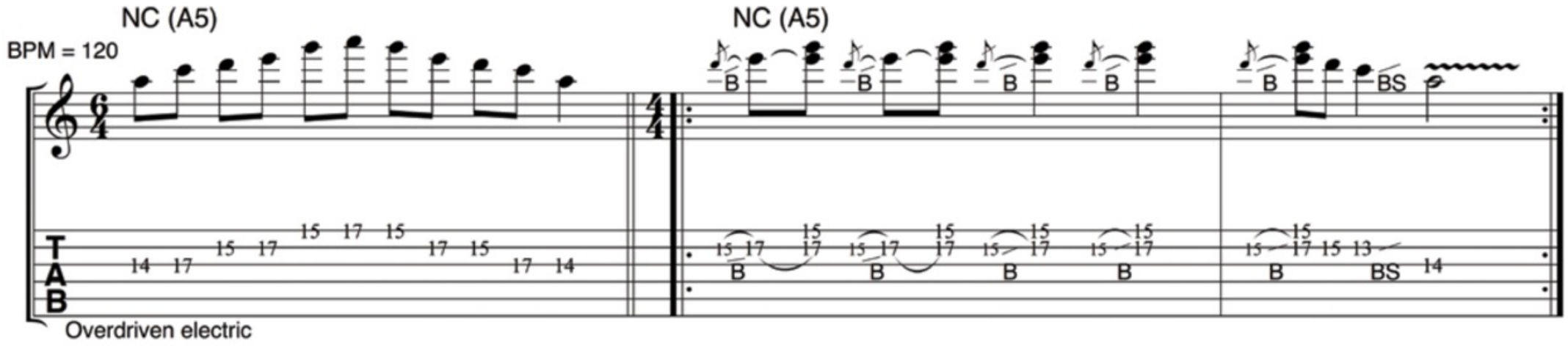
7 STOCK PENTATONIC MINOR LICK

6/4 TIME

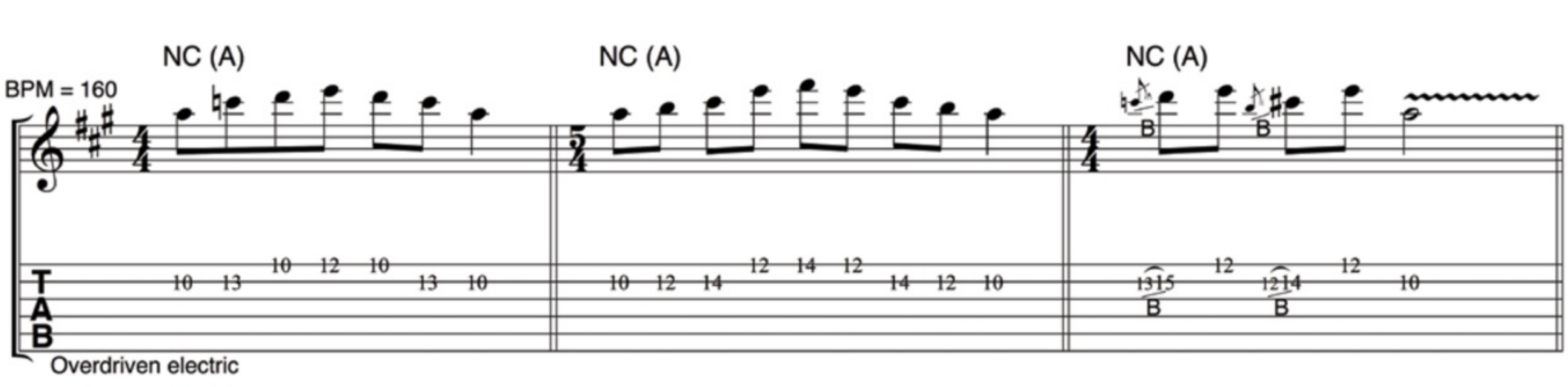
The first bar of this exercise shows a one octave A pentatonic minor scale (A C D E G A) in the upper region of the fretboard. A favourite lick of Allman's is to bend from the fourth to the fifth of the pentatonic minor scale on the second string in conjunction with the minor seventh on the top string. He plays this lick both melodically, whereby the strings are struck separately, as shown on the first two beats of bar two, or harmonically, with the strings struck simultaneously, as shown on the third and fourth beats. Allman can be heard using this type of lick in *In Memory of Elizabeth Reed* from 11:40 to 11:55 and in *Whipping Post* from 4:38 to 4:49.



8 MIXING PENTATONIC MINOR AND MAJOR SCALES

4/4 TIME

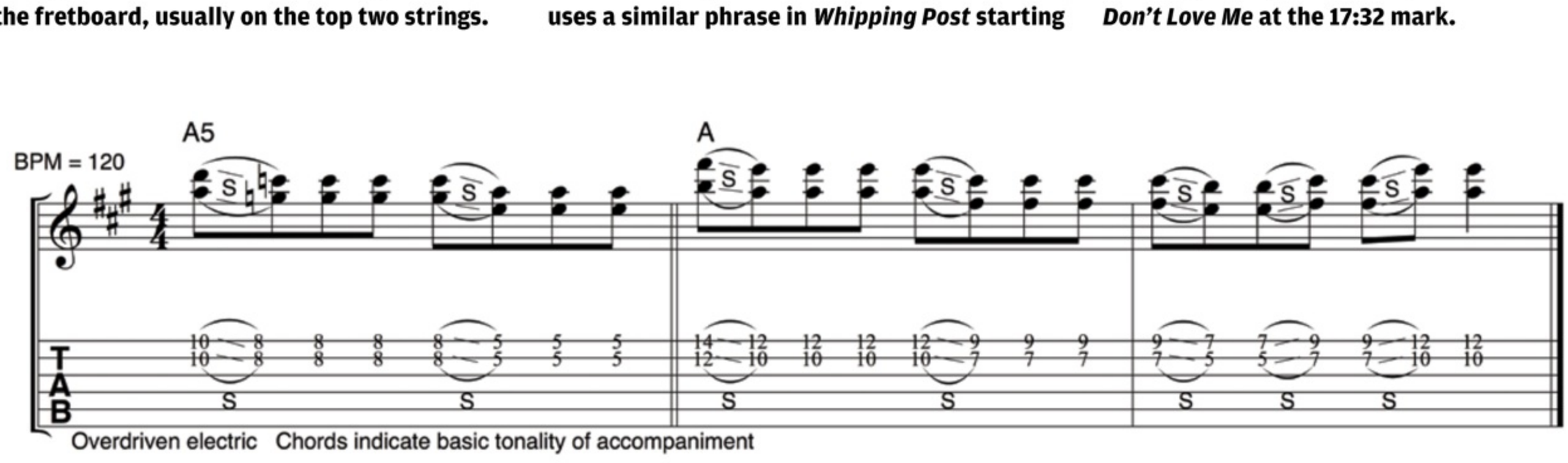
Allman occasionally mixes the pentatonic minor and pentatonic major scale in the same phrase. Bar one shows part of the A major pentatonic scale (A B C# E F#) and bar two shows part of the A pentatonic minor scale (A C D E). Bar three is similar to a phrase in *You Don't Love Me* at 7:07 in which Allman bends from the minor third to the fourth from the pentatonic minor scale, hits a high E, then bends from the second to the major third of the pentatonic major scale – so this second bend is a semitone lower than the first bend.



9 SLIDING FOURTHS AND FIFTHS

4/4 TIME

Allman occasionally plays phrases based on sliding fourths or fifths intervals up and down the fretboard, usually on the top two strings. The first bar of the exercise uses sliding fourths moving down the fretboard; Allman uses a similar phrase in *Whipping Post* starting at 4:09. Bars two and three use a fifth interval, sliding down and up. Check out *You Don't Love Me* at the 17:32 mark.



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10 DORIAN MODE IMPROVISING

4/4 TIME

Influenced by jazz artists like Miles Davis and John Coltrane, Allman sometimes based his solos on modes over a repeating chord progression, and there are some great examples of this in *In Memory of Elizabeth Reed*. The first line below shows the A Dorian mode – A B C D E F# G A. There's considerable overlap between the A pentatonic minor scale and the A Dorian mode; the Dorian mode can be thought of as the A pentatonic minor scale plus the second (B) and sixth (F#) degrees of the scale, so it's not a big leap to go from bluesy improvising with the pentatonic minor to jazzy improvising.

The second line shows a couple of phrases rather like those used by Allman in the *Elizabeth Reed* solo from 17:46 to 12:04. The second line is similar to a phrase played by Allman at 7:55. Note how the hammer-ons and slides add a fluency to the phrasing, and the use of staccato and vibrato add to the expressiveness. Incidentally, Allman starts his solo in *Whipping Post* at 1:45 with a phrase very similar to this (both songs are in the key of A minor – a hammer-on from G to A on the second string, a repeated A note, followed by the reverse pull-off.

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Phil Lynott

Thin Lizzy's fabulous 1978 double live album captures a band at its peak and a frontman who could effortlessly cover the bass role. **Gareth Morgan** pays tribute to a rock great

Thin Lizzy's 1978 live album *Live And Dangerous* was arguably the high point of the band's career. It came after a run of three increasingly successful studio albums, starting with *Jailbreak*, then *Johnny The Fox* (both 1976) and finally *Bad Reputation* (1977). All four albums featured what many consider to be Thin Lizzy's best-ever line-up: Brian Downey on drums, Scott Gorham and Brian Robertson on guitars and, on bass and lead vocals, the force of nature that was Phil Lynott.

Formed in 1970, Thin Lizzy's first line-up of Lynott, Downey and guitarist Eric Bell recorded three albums of varying quality and with, at best, moderate success. By the time of the first two albums with the revamped twin guitar line-up (Mk II Thin Lizzy, anyone?) a heavy touring schedule had turned the band into a tight, professional unit and, with Lynott's songwriting maturing beyond recognition, the breakthrough arrived in 1976 in the form of probably his most famous composition, *The Boys Are Back in Town*, a massive hit single on both sides of the Atlantic. Record sales and popularity continued to grow and by the time *Live and Dangerous* was released they'd racked up successive Top 10 albums and were one of the biggest bands around.

The album itself was culled from gigs in Philadelphia, Toronto and London and contains anything from 25 to 75 per cent overdubs, depending on which source you believe. There's no denying the fact that listening to it effectively recreates the excitement of a Thin Lizzy live show, with an inspired choice of songs and exemplary musicianship on display throughout. *Live And Dangerous* is justifiably rated as one of the best double live albums of all time – which, considering the esteemed competition, is high praise indeed.

Throughout the album Lynott's bass work is top-notch, whether he's simply pounding away on root notes, riffing hard alongside Gorham and Robertson or hitting you right between the eyes with a machinegun fill. All of this is delivered with pick in hand on his favoured Fender Precision bass with the trademark mirror scratchplate.

Lynott's chosen right-hand playing position was somewhere near the bridge and, with tone and volume controls at maximum, this produced a fat sound with clarity and attack, further enlivened by plenty of aggressive clank. The fact that Phil Lynott's bass is the instrument that dominates *Live And Dangerous* shouldn't be any surprise given the fact that it was his personality that really gave Thin Lizzy its drive and attitude.

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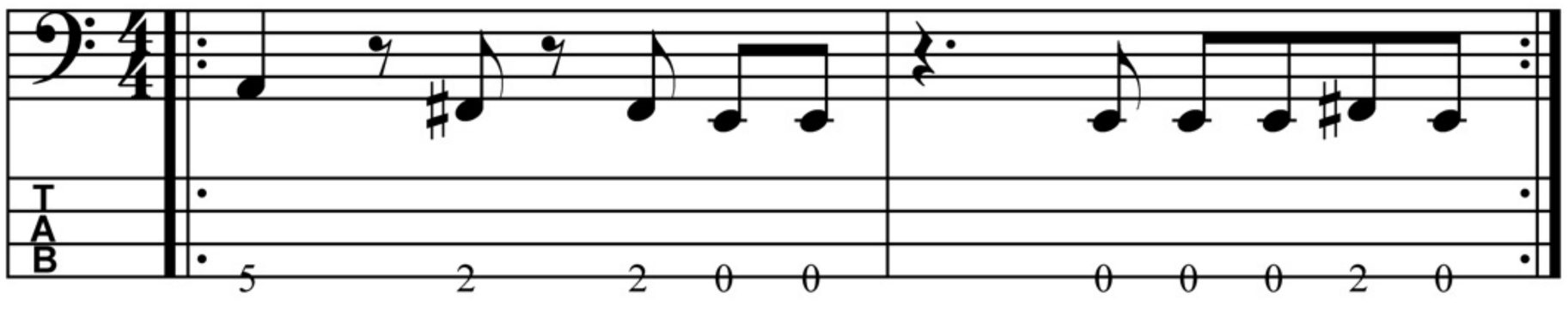
1 BLUESY EIGHTH NOTE LINE — 4/4 TIME

While Lynott was fully prepared to stay with the root note, he also tended to veer towards some form of melody, even if it only involved a modicum of variation from the basic approach. Our first example is based on the oldest song on the Live and Dangerous set, *The Rocker*, originally recorded for *Vagabonds of the Western World* (1973), and is a little bit more complex than that; though Lynott pumps away on the root notes, the rock'n'roll-inspired melody he weaves into his bassline adds plenty of interest.

2 BROKEN EIGHTH NOTE UNISON — 4/4 TIME

Some of the most effective Thin Lizzy riffs feature Lynott playing with both guitars in a powerful unison. As you'll see later, this often involved a chops-busting stream of 16th notes but there were also some times when they played it simple and straight ahead, and the song that opens the set, *Jailbreak*, is a perfect example of this. In the chorus and middle sections, Lynott first hits us with some thundering melodic eighth-note work but during the verses he's tight with the guitars – very much like this.

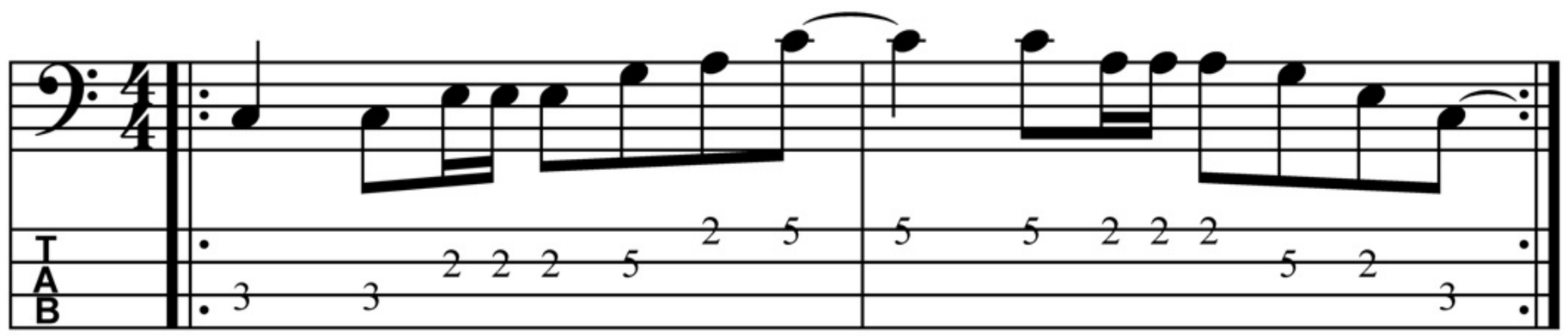


3 MELODIC SHUFFLE PART WITH TRIPLET — 4/4 TIME

As we mentioned, it was the success of *The Boys Are Back In Town* in 1976 (which reached an impressive #8 in the UK and #12 in the USA) that proved to be the springboard for the band. The live version is a pretty faithful rendition of the single version, which means Lynott's intro bass hook, solid swinging through the numerous verse chord changes and funky octave punctuations are all in place. Our example is based on the section just before the outro, replete with bluesy riffing and a triplet variation in bar two.

4 PENTATONIC MELODY WITH 16TH NOTE KICK — 4/4 TIME

Lynott's use of a pick was a major factor in creating his basic sound. Also, when taken with a pretty strict and well-developed up-and-down-stroke technique, it enabled him to effortlessly double or triple the time – for instance, inserting 16th notes into an eighth-note part or triplets into a shuffle. Check out *Warriors* or *Cowboy Song* for examples of this in a straight eighths context, or *Rosalie* where Lynott regularly injects it into a neat pentatonic melody. The two bars below will get you pretty close.



5 FUNKY RIFFING

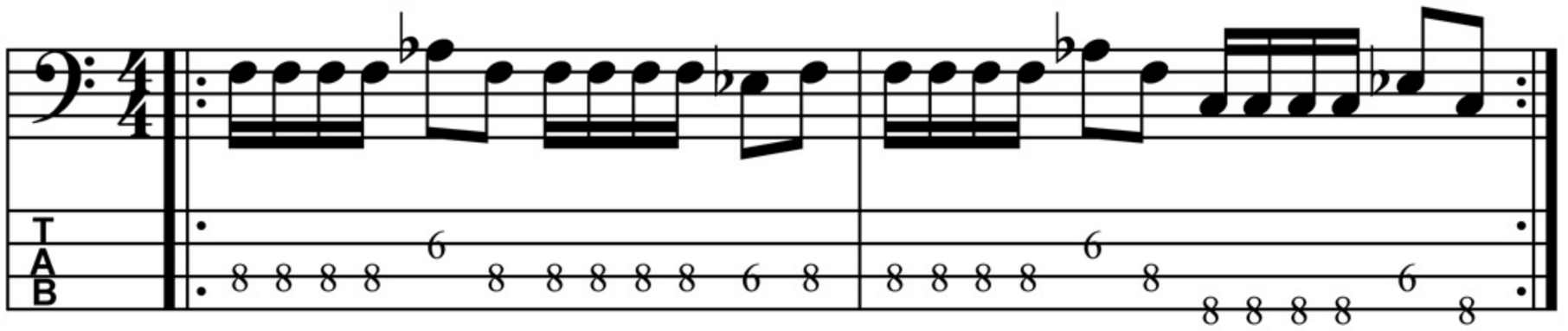
4/4 TIME

If you're beginning to get the impression that unless he was tied to a unison riff with Gorham or Robertson Lynott preferred to play a more expansive game, think again. Check out the funky broken shuffle of *Dancing In The Moonlight* (the intro is possibly Lynott's most famous bass hook) and the rhythmic dynamics in *Southbound*; there's plenty of light and shade on display here. This should put you in mind of the out-and-out funk part in *Johnny The Fox Meets Jimmy the Weed*, where he's locked down tight with Downey's kick drum.

6 UP TEMPO SIXTEENTH-NOTE UNISON

4/4 TIME

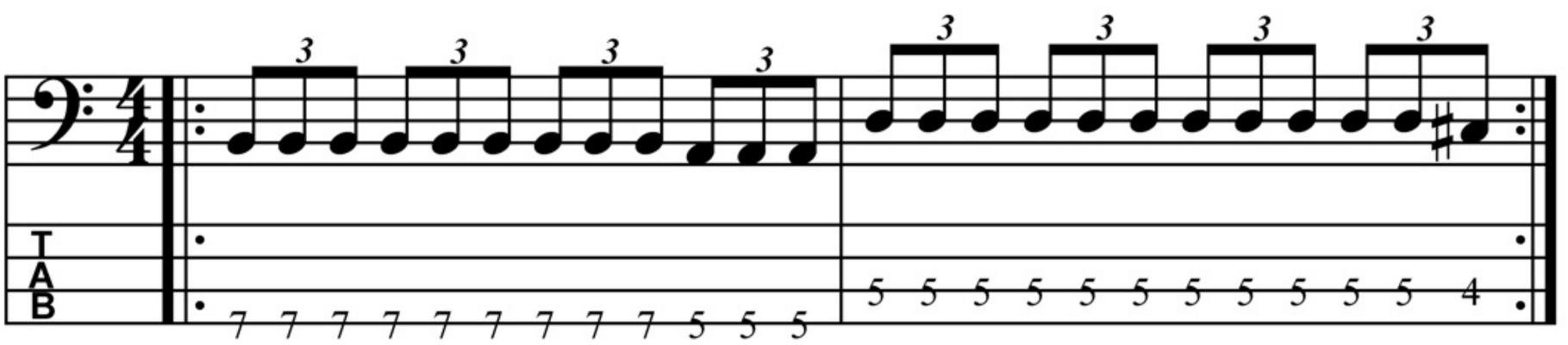
Certain Thin Lizzy songs lull you into a false sense of security. Take *Massacre*, for example: the unison melody that opens the song is straightforward and the verse section has Lynott hitting long, held root notes. What happens elsewhere is a lot more challenging, and this example should give you an idea of the nightmare unison riff used as a bridge section and under the guitar solo. Because the tempo is fierce, it's hard with a pick and really tough to do fingerstyle, so the usual 'start slowly' rule most definitely applies.



7 ROLLING TRIPLET GROOVE

4/4 TIME

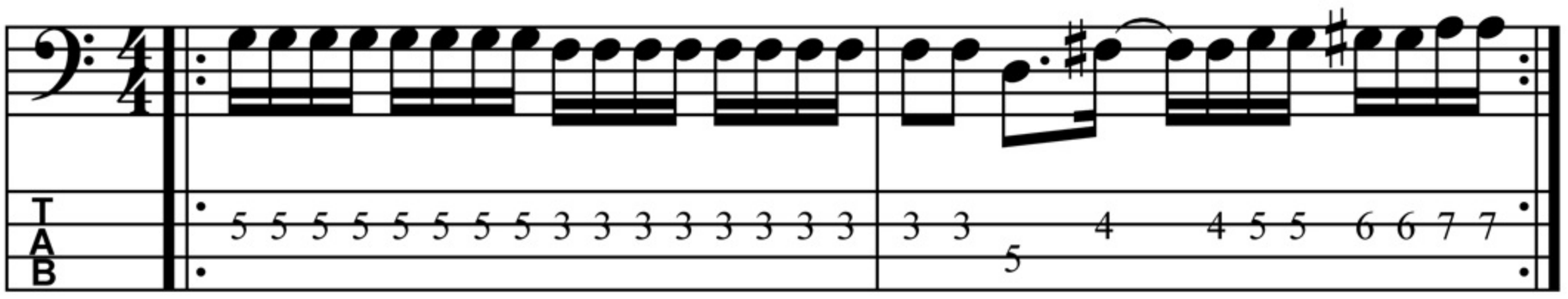
Lynott wasn't afraid to draw on the history and folklore of his native Ireland in his songs. *Emerald* is an excellent example, invoking both the history of violence in the country and also, via the song's middle section, its more romantic side. The bass playing is superb throughout the song, from the pentatonic unison riff to Lynott's expansive risk-taking over the coda guitar solo. This example should give you a leg up with the verse part, a tricky triplet pattern that, again, requires careful practising to get it to sit comfortably.



8 RAPID-FIRE 16TH GROOVE WITH FILL

4/4 TIME

For our final example we're featuring more of Lynott's machinegun 16th note work. This particular part is from *Sha La La* and the rapid tempo makes it another nightmare, however honed your technique. The fill in bar two of our version approximates to the kind of ideas Lynott employs in the section just prior to the short guitar solo at around two minutes in. Because the start of the fill is syncopated, it's tricky to get the timing right if you just pile in at full tempo – so, as always, slow it right down and be patient.



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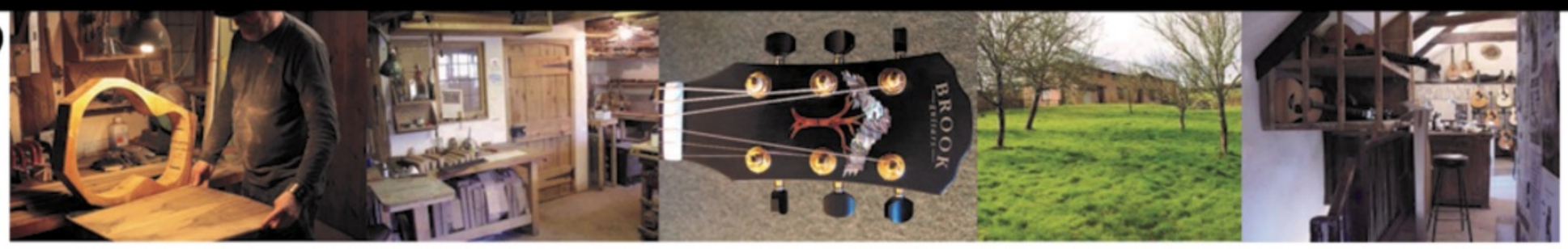

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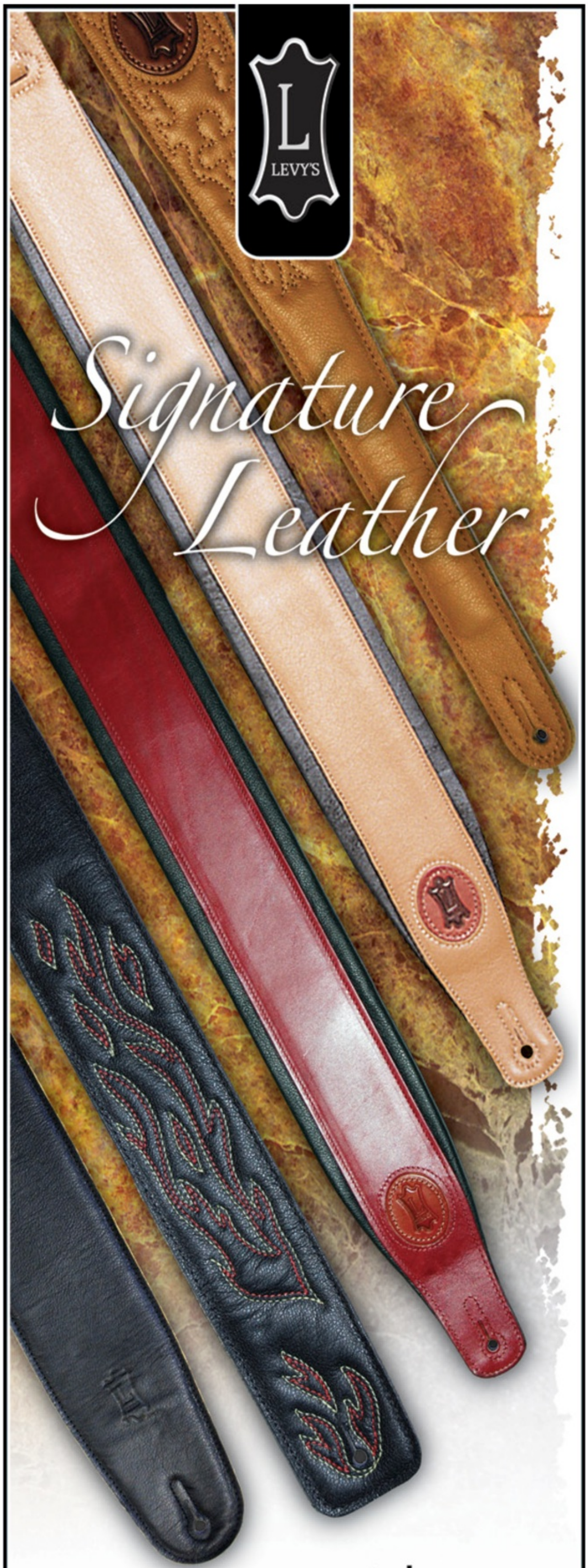

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Breedlove J350/EF, Baggs system fitted, absolutely mint, hard case, £800, no offers. Tel Robin 01737 225798, Surrey

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Ibanez electro-acoustic Artcore AF75, new in September, f-holes, illness forces sale, free delivery Sheffield area, £225. Tel: 0114 2885749 or 0749 5418442

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Gibson ES-339 sunburst, Tonepros, Buzz Feiten, £1295. Gibson J200 sunburst 1974, £2395. Fender Tele 50th Anniversary B Bender, £925. Line 6 Spider IV 75, £180. Email: andy@agl.me.uk or Tel: 01424 774389, East Sussex.

Fender American Telecaster Standard, natural ash, r/n, Fender hardcase, mint, £600. 07510 645367, Sheffield.

Matchless 8x12 cabinets (pair), Sampson era, half open back, Matchless Vintage 30s, flightcased, vgc, £750 each. Steve 07774 696003 steviejim@yahoo.com, London

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CROSSWORD JUNE 2012

ACROSS

7. A near gold beer brewed for gypsy style guitarist (6,7)

8. Can my pod make an MXR sustain pedal? (4,4)

9. ___ Wylde (4)

10. Topical modification to humbucker (7)

12. Falls for drug experiences (5)

14. Vincent Damien Furnier also in chains (5)

16. Fender Mexican twin humbucker loses nothing to storm (7)

19. Stops telling jokes (4)

20. Eventually it is extra work (8)

22. Flatten brogue in a way that must be remembered (13)

DOWN

1. Finger-stylist Mr McKee (4)

2. Remember about ring (6)

3. _____ Philips Leitch – sometimes called yellow! (7)

4. Guitarist empowered with speed of piece (5)

5. Jabs buzzer heartlessly for typically large bodied archtop (6)

6. Stops car to smash home we hear (5,3)

11. Artist's material mixed into pail (3,5)

13. Guitar decoration worn on lapel (7)

15. Three pickup Les Paul could be a habit? (6)

17. Band to make OK (3,3)

18. Drum for line dance (5)

21. Said to be post man (4)

Squier Strat, red, maple neck, new vintage pickups, Fuji-gen circa 93-94, case, vgc, £265 ono. Tel 07753 224 395 Wirral. Email: timbrett48@gmail.com

Fender Precision, 1973, natural M/N, all orig inc. covers, EMG fitted/original supplied. Case, £1750 ono Tel: 0208 9777228. Email pnbell@btinternet.com

Ampeg SVTII 300W bass amp, 1988, non-master vol, graphic, serviced, revalved, £800. Ampeg SVT 810E cab 4 ohm, refinished in black Hammerite, £400. Steve 07774 696 003, steviejim@yahoo.com, London

Hiscox hard case for LP, £50. Orange Crush PiX 35LDX amp, £140. Peavey Vyper 15, £55. Both as new, with boxes. Chris 07545 330 053 or cjbtrek@btinternet.com, Northampton

Gibson Les Paul 08 Standard Goldtop, pristine, asymmetric neck, locking tuners, chambered body etc, £1550 ovno. Tel: 07803496748 or email Paulevansv8@yahoo.co.uk

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Soundtrack of my life

The Soundtrack Of Our Lives

As these Swedish rockers inspired the title of this feature we felt it was right and proper that the band got the chance to put forward their own cherished long-players

This Gothenberg collective produce some of the finest psychedelia-tinged melodic rock to have emerged from Scandinavia – or anywhere else in the world. Ian Person (guitar), Mattias Bärjed (guitar) and Kalle Gustafsson (bass) draw on a vast array of influences to craft a mighty and intoxicating brew in which you can detect echoes of the Who, the Stones and many other classic elements without ever feeling you've heard it all before. The band's sixth album, *Throw It To The Universe*, is a compendium of this prolific outfit's unreleased material taken from every era of TSOOL's 17-year existence – and it's a true testament to the band's enviable wealth of songwriting talent.

George Harrison

ALL THINGS MUST PASS

Ian: My Mum had five LPs which make up my first musical memories. There was Bachman-Turner Overdrive and Deep Purple... but I always loved *Wah Wah* from this. Clapton's playing is all over the record but it's the way George sings a melody then repeats it on slide guitar that I really love. I've copied that more than once!

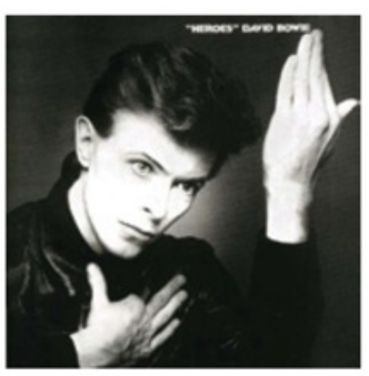
The Stooges

FUN HOUSE

Mattias: The ultimate rock'n'roll album – the songs, the playing, the production, the cover... everything. I first heard it in 1988 when I got it for my best friend's 14th birthday. After that I became obsessed with the Stooges. I skipped school just to sit and play along to it – a solid grounding for my playing and writing.

David Bowie

HEROES



Kalle: In 1982, when I was 12, me and a friend managed to sneak in to a Bowie concert. Bowie broadened our horizons. *Heroes* inspired me to go to Berlin; get drunk on schnapps, visit punk clubs and the Bauhaus museum. I went there again in 1989 to knock down the wall, and recently to record in the Hansa studio.

The Damned

MACHINE GUN ETIQUETTE

Ian: I was nine or 10, punk had just arrived and this was the first LP I bought – it's the perfect mix of heavy rock, punk and pop. There's actually a load of guitar solos and some of the tracks are really heavy. *Smash It Up*, *Love Song*... there's not a bad one on it. This was a real inspiration when I first started playing.

The Who

WHO'S NEXT

Mattias: *Who's Next* is a masterpiece. Pete Townshend's writing helped me to gain confidence to view myself as a songwriter. It also encouraged me to get my first Hiwatt amp and win the volume war in the Nymphet Noodlers, the band that Martin Hederos [TSOOL keys man] and I used to play in.

The Velvet Underground & Nico

THE VELVET UNDERGROUND & NICO

Kalle: Turned down by three labels before it got released, this is the archetype of cool. *Venus In Furs* is the peak, with Cale's hypnotic weird drone.

The playing is primal but effective. Lou Reed had a tuning called 'the ostrich', with all strings tuned the same. If ever a tuning could be called sexy, that was the one!

Oasis

(WHAT'S THE STORY) MORNING GLORY?

Ian: This came out when we first started the band. I'd been listening to a lot of old stuff like the Stones and Zeppelin, but this made me tune into new music again. Noel's guitar parts aren't really solos, they're like guitar hooks, and the songs are excellent. There's a feeling of freedom on this record, I think.

Bachman-Turner Overdrive

NOT FRAGILE

Mattias: This album is a milestone and probably the record I've listened to the most in my life. I'm sure the path that I've taken is all because of this record. I've got about 15 copies of *Not Fragile*, all of them played to death. If I'm in a store and I see it, I react with animal instinct... ATTACK! GOT TO HAVE IT!!

Leonard Cohen

SONGS OF LOVE AND HATE

Kalle: Sexuality, relationships and religion; you get personal and you want to be close to this man. I love his voice, and I can listen to it over and over again. The production, the arrangements and the flamenco-influenced classical guitar are all brilliant, but it's the voice that makes you feel such intimacy.

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